

true crime

Nottingham's Classic Case Of
**ARSENIC AND
OLD JUSTICE**



**Sydney's
Killer
Without
Remorse**
Will His Victims
Ever Be Found?

Detective Monthly

APRIL 2019

20 Years On...

**WILL WE
EVER
KNOW
WHO
KILLED
JILL?**



**WHY DOUBLE-
KILLER CHOSE
TO DIE IN THE
ELECTRIC CHAIR**



**THE MOBSTER,
THE STARLET –
AND MURDER INC.**



DIGITAL
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EDITION

**THE DOCTOR
HAD A
DEATH
CHAMBER**



ARE THERE MANSON KILLINGS WE JUST DON'T KNOW ABOUT?

The ugly killings carried out by the Manson "Family" live on down the years in infamy. On August 9th, 1969, the cult broke into the home of film director Roman Polanski in Los Angeles and stabbed to death his pregnant wife, actress Sharon Tate.

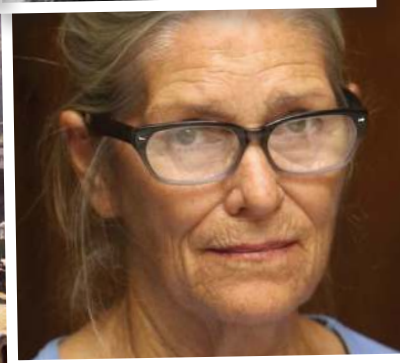
They shot or fatally stabbed four other people and, on the following night, stabbed two more. Two more killings were also attributed to Manson.

The Manson followers were a killing machine and young middle-class females played a leading role in the horrors.

Now 50 years later, the inevitable speculations have come to a peak once more. Manson died in jail at 83 in 2017 so the one big lasting chance the law had to dig out the facts has now gone.

One such mystery was the fate of 19-year-old Reet Juvetson. She had come to Los Angeles from Toronto to meet a male friend. Her body was found in the autumn of 1969, dumped five miles away from the Polanski home. This "Jane Doe" was not identified until 2015.

People, the American weekly magazine of celebrity and human-interest stories, has looked into three other



Clockwise from top left: Manson at his 12th parole hearing; Leslie Van Houten at 19; Leslie at 69; Charles Manson and "The Family" came to live in the near-derelict Spahn Ranch near Los Angeles

possible Manson cult murders.

The remains of college student Marina Habe, 17, were found on New Year's Day, 1969, on the same stretch of road as Reet's. Doreen Gaul, 19, and her friend James Sharp, 15, had

been found fatally stabbed in a Los Angeles alleyway in November, 1969.

Manson is dead but that has only sharpened interest and this coincides with the attempt by Manson follower Leslie Van Houten – to win parole. She had

been sentenced to death for the murder of grocer Leno LaBlanca and his wife Rosemary the night after the Tate killings. The sentence was later reduced to life.

The California Board of Control has embarked on a 150-day review process.

TC Comp: Win FACE TO FACE WITH SERIAL KILLERS

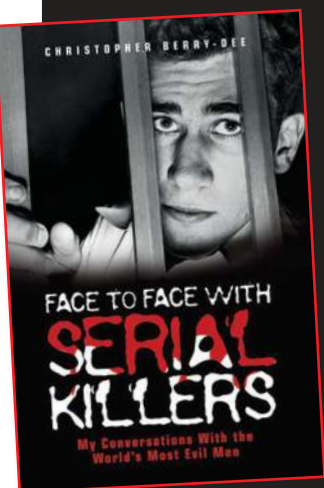
We've all heard so much about the killers who grab the front pages, the killers whose crimes are so appalling that they exert a strange fascination for many people. But we rarely get to hear about what these people are like behind the headlines. Until now that is. Here is what happens when you meet the people most of us know only from our worst nightmares and newspaper headlines. Author and criminologist Christopher Berry-Dee reveals the killers' stories in their own words. So be prepared for a journey into the darkest imaginable side of human nature...

For a chance to win a paperback copy of *Face To Face With Serial Killers* by Christopher Berry-Dee (published by John Blake Publishing Ltd; ISBN 978-1-84454-367-0) just answer this question:

The surname of the killer featured on the cover of the book was Heirens. What was his first name?

- ☐ George ☐ William ☐ Henry ☐ Arthur

Send your answer to True Crime April competition, PO Box 735, London SE26 5NQ, or email truecrime@truecrimelibrary.com, with the subject line "TC April Comp." The first correct entry out of the hat after the closing date of April 18th will win. The winner will be announced in the June issue. The winner of the True Crime February competition with the answer Lincoln is Claire Kinsey of Stoke on Trent. Well done! Your copy of *Pathological – The Murderous Rage Of Dr. Anthony Garcia* will be with you soon.



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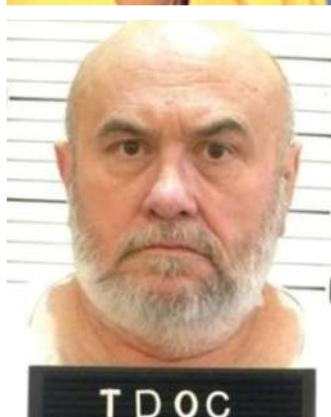
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We also publish Master Detective, True Detective and Murder Most Foul

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Thirty-five years after he murdered two men in Tennessee, Edmund Zagorski paid the ultimate price for his crime. His theory was that electrocution would be the quicker way to die...

IT WASN'T much of a choice. But Edmund Zagorski hadn't given the two drug dealers he killed much choice either. Now, many years later, he was facing the final retribution. And he had to decide exactly how he would like to meet his end.

"Horrifically, Mr. Zagorski

**Case report by
Joseph L. Koenig
& Harold Heys**

was forced to choose between 10 to 18 minutes of chemically burning from the inside while paralysed or being literally burned to death in less than a minute," Kelley Henry, one of his defence team, said at a press conference following the execution.

"He should never have been forced to make that choice. Neither of Tennessee's current options for execution are humane or constitutional. The state must find a better method of execution that comports with the innate dignity of all human beings and the constitutional protection from torture."

He finally decided that death in the chair would be quicker than a three-drug cocktail that medical experts have said is akin to being buried alive and burned alive.

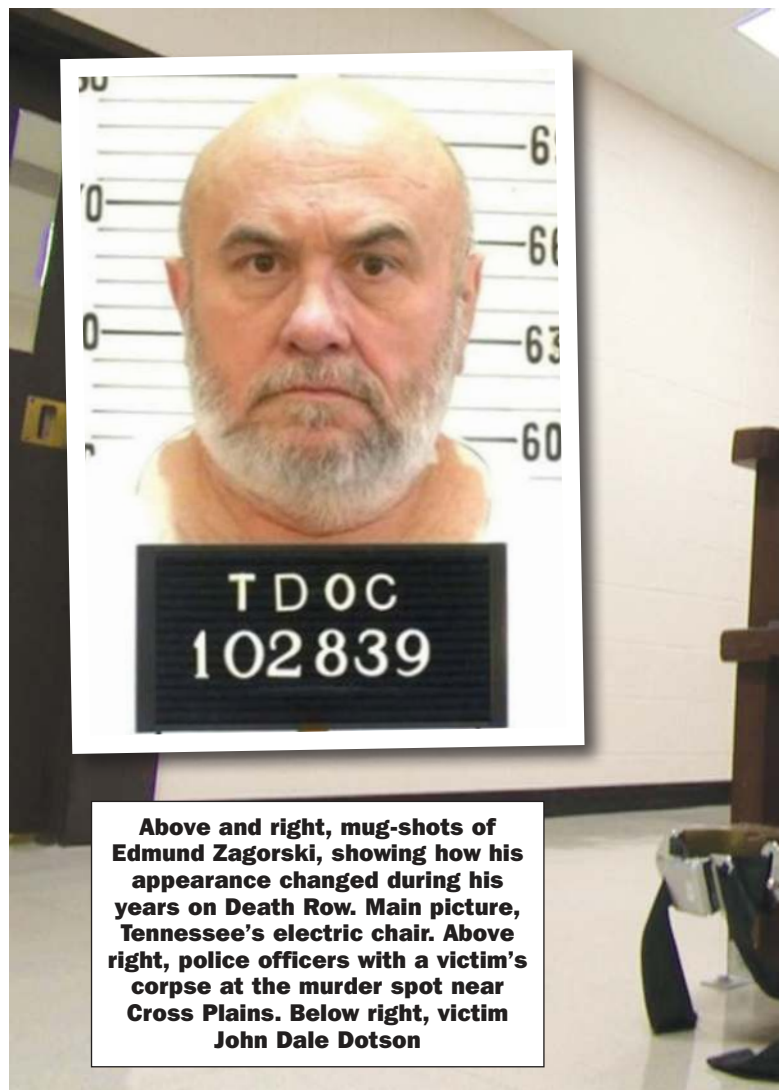
No, it wasn't much of a choice.

"The execution," said Ms. Henry, was "a barbarous act." She wiped away a tear as she told reporters that successive legal teams had "come to care for him very much." He had been a model prisoner.

She described graphically 63-year-old Zagorski's end in the death chamber. Every single muscle in his body became rigid. Every single nerve was on fire. A white shroud covered his face "so there was no way to see the burns."

Edmund Zagorski had kept death at bay for 34 years till November 1st, 2018, after being sentenced for shooting the two dealers in Hickman County, slitting their throats and stealing their money. A police officer had been shot in a shoot-out as the fugitive was chased through Ohio, nearly 500 miles to the north.

It was a chilly Saturday afternoon, April 23rd, 1983, when 35-year-old Jimmy Porter, of Dickson, Tennessee, along with a friend, John Dale Dotson, a 28-year-old timber-cutter from nearby McEwen, drove off in their red pickup truck. Both were in high spirits. They had confided to friends that they were about to embark on a business deal which stood to make them a quick and substantial profit. Details were rather vague.



Above and right, mug-shots of Edmund Zagorski, showing how his appearance changed during his years on Death Row. Main picture, Tennessee's electric chair. Above right, police officers with a victim's corpse at the murder spot near Cross Plains. Below right, victim John Dale Dotson

WHY DOUBL TO DIE IN TH

When Porter and Dotson failed to return to their homes that evening, their friends and families were sure that something serious had gone down. As more time passed without a word from the two men, their wives reported them as missing.

Officers were told that they were bound for neighbouring Hickman County. And that was where the initial search was centred.

A few days later an air, ground and waterborne search got under way in the thickly-wooded hill country.

As daylight faded from the skies, a helicopter was brought into the hunt.

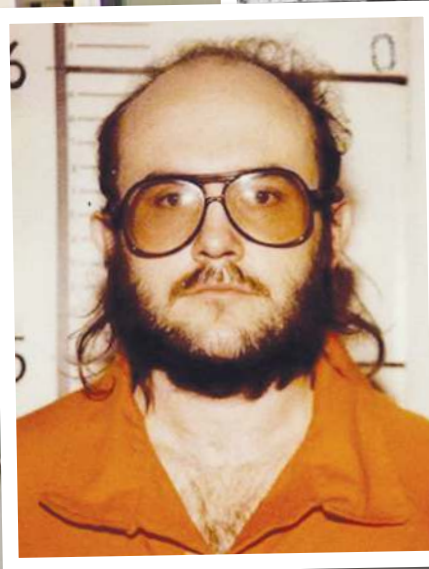
Jeff Long, an investigator with the Hickman County district attorney's office, told reporters that the police believed Dale Dotson and Jimmy Porter – the owner of a popular Dickson tavern – might have come to some harm.

On the following day, searchers moving along a tributary of the Red River, near Cross Plains, discovered the badly-decomposed remains of two men sprawled on a muddy creek bank.

Sheriff Ted Emery tentatively identified the pair as the missing men.

Asked about a possible motive, Emery said: "We have good information that this was a rip-off in a drug deal. We know there is a large sum of money missing. Yet both men had some money in their wallets when the bodies were found."

"How much money is gone?" a reporter asked. Although he was not at liberty to divulge the figure, Emery said: "It was enough to buy 100 pounds of marijuana. You can do a little figuring and see that you're



recently threatened to kill him.”

The autopsy reports showed that both victims had been shot in the body with a high-powered rifle and had also been slashed about the throat. Missing from Jimmy Porter’s body were a diamond-studded wedding ring, a .357-calibre pistol and eight bullets.

Sheriff Emery told reporters: “We know now – and several of the people

THE KILLER CHOSE THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

talking in the \$20,000 to \$30,000 bracket.”

Emery also told newsmen that Porter’s red pickup with a white top and Michigan licence plates remained missing, despite a nationwide search order on the vehicle.

On Tuesday, May 10th, reporters learned that two businessmen, plus the members of a Nashville motorcycle gang, were conducting investigations of their own into the murders of Jimmy Porter and Dale Dotson.

“The way it looks to us now,” said one source



close to the search, “Porter and Dotson had raised the money for the deal from a variety of sources. And now these sources want the money back.”

Sheriff Emery told newsmen that investigators had come up with a suspect – a 30-year-old drifter with a record for drug violations and a wide variety of aliases. There were also indications that a second person might be involved.

“This one certainly had a motive,” Emery said. “Porter had ripped him off for several thousand dollars – and we know that he’d

we’ve talked to know now – that there never was any dope.

“The whole thing was just a scam to get these men to raise a large amount of money, so they could be robbed.”

Found along the creek-bed with the bodies, it was revealed, were a shell casing and a knife scabbard, believed to be the property of 30-year-old Edmund George Zagorski, the drifter and loner who was the leading suspect in the double-slaying. The shell casing could reportedly be matched to another from

Zagorski's high-powered rifle, retrieved from friends in Bucksnot, Tennessee.

Investigators also revealed that one of the dead men had been carrying a list of names of people believed to be drug buyers. Most were Dickson residents – and some were believed to be purchasing drugs on credit.

Emery had learned that when Porter drove away from Dickson on April 23rd he was carrying a .357 magnum revolver, eight bullets and \$30,000 in a deposit bag from the United Southern Bank in Bucksnot.

On Wednesday, May 11th, 1983, Judge Thomas Guthrie, sitting in Springfield, issued first-degree murder warrants against Edmund George Zagorski for the slayings of Jimmy Porter and Dale Dotson.

More than a month earlier, Emery revealed, Zagorski had come to Hickman County, where he met a former colleague. Zagorski reportedly told the man that he was en route to El Salvador, where he had been hired to serve as a mercenary soldier.

Zagorski had told him he'd parachuted into the rugged hill country of eastern Humphreys County before making his way to the man's home near Bucksnot. He had gone on to discuss the possibility of gathering hunting weapons in Hickman County for resale in El Salvador

"He said that one good semi-automatic rifle and 200 rounds of ammunition would bring \$2,000 in El Salvador," his former colleague told investigators. Zagorski, he went on, had been living in the woods near his home, devoting much of his time to arrangements for having 100 pounds of marijuana dropped into the county from the air.

Emery said his investigators had determined that, after raising a large sum of cash, Dale Dotson and Jimmy Porter had agreed to travel to Hickman County to meet Zagorski, who would take them to the spot where he had hidden the marijuana. At about 4.30 on the afternoon of April 23rd, as planned, the men left Dickson in Porter's red pickup.

"We're convinced now,



Police at the scene of the murders load the corpses of Zagorski's two victims onto a pickup truck

though, that Zagorski set up this entire deal as a scam to get them to raise a large sum of money – and then he planned to rob them. We feel he lured the two men to the spot where we found the bodies, then killed them and took the money."

For some two weeks, investigators searched without luck for the elusive Zagorski. It was not until noon on Thursday, May 26th, that Scioto County, Ohio, deputies spotted him behind the wheel of a brown pickup truck. After they tailed the vehicle for a while, two police cruisers

from his arm.

Later that afternoon, shortly after the fugitive had been taken into custody, a friend of his handed in a red Datsun pickup truck to investigators. The suspect had given the truck to a Scioto County man.

Zagorski, who had been making his home in a disused barn, was taken back to Tennessee.

At a preliminary hearing on July 21st, investigator Jeff Long testified that the double-murder suspect had told lawmen that he was the "middle-man" who set up a drug deal between Jimmy

Dickson – and the two men went to pick up Zagorski along a dirt road, on which he had told them he would be walking. The men rode in Porter's recently-bought Datsun pickup truck, which still carried the Michigan licence tags of the previous owner.

Tommy Heflin, a Tennessee Bureau of Investigation firearms expert, told the court that an empty cartridge found near the victims' bodies had been fired from Zagorski's rifle.

At Edmund Zagorski's murder trial, which got under way in Springfield in the last week of February, 1984, Dale Dotson's wife testified that both victims had gone to meet the defendant on April 23rd to complete a drug deal, in which they would purchase 100 pounds of marijuana for a price in excess of \$25,000.

At the time, the witness said, Zagorski was known to her as Jesse Lee Hardin – and he claimed to have come to Hickman County on April 7th, by parachuting from a Memphis-to-Nashville flight.

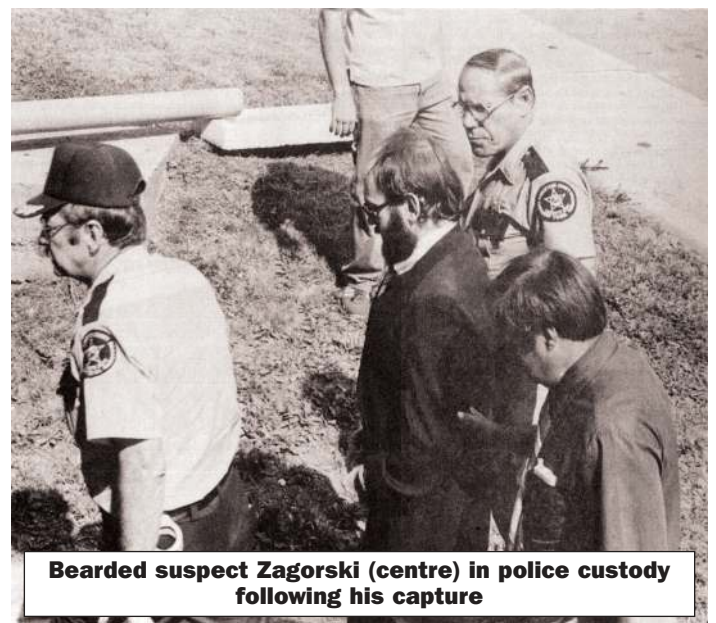
When they were introduced to him in mid-April, he had claimed that he was a mercenary recently returned from

"Zagorski set up this deal as a scam to get them to raise money. He lured the men to the spot, then he killed them and took the money"

approached – one from the rear and the other from the front.

"His truck collided with a cruiser," a police spokesman reported later. "Immediately after impact, he opened fire...with a military-type rifle."

Deputy Bill Hall was wounded in the exchange and was rushed to hospital with injuries to his back. Zagorski, in a bulletproof vest, was struck in the arm and had a superficial head wound. He underwent surgery to remove the bullet



Bearded suspect Zagorski (centre) in police custody following his capture

Porter, Dale Dotson and two of his mercenary soldier buddies.

They had met up in Bucksnot on April 23rd and travelled to Dickson, where they picked up two more mercenaries. From there, the men travelled in three vehicles towards Kentucky.

Dotson met Porter in

Belize and El Salvador where he trained men for jungle warfare at the behest of whoever would pay them well. The defendant had a double-edged knife and a .308-calibre rifle, which he "carried with him everywhere he went."

Another witness said that Zagorski claimed the

marijuana was dropped from the air into a wooded area, where he was camping early on the morning of April 21st.

A Scioto County man – a friend of Zagorski's – said that when the defendant came to Ohio on April 24th, he was driving Porter's truck and carrying a small revolver and some clothing which also belonged to the victims.

In his final argument on March 2nd, District Attorney Ray Whitley told the jury: "We have proved that Zagorski doesn't give a hoot about human life. He shows no emotions. He knew he would eventually be caught and he was going to be ready. That is why he bought the guns, bulletproof vest and ammunition in Ohio."

The jury debated for two hours before finding Zagorski guilty of two counts of first-degree murder. And during the penalty phase of the trial, which began later that day, Whitley argued that a death penalty was mandated by law and it was the jury's responsibility to return it against the defendant based on the aggravating factors involved in the case.

One of the killer's attorneys countered: "I beg you to have compassion and see that the death penalty will not accomplish justice. Nothing is more premeditated than sending a man to the electric chair."

This time, the jurors debated for two and a half hours before ruling that Edmund George Zagorski should pay for his crimes with his life.

Prosecutor Whitley said he was "pleased and grateful" that the jury had returned the death penalty. It was doubtful that anyone in that courtroom envisaged the mercenary murderer still being alive some 34 years later.

Zagorski was the first Tennessee prisoner killed by electrocution for 11 years and was the 127th person, all of them men, to die in a Tennessee electric chair. It was first used in 1916 to kill a black man who had nearly been lynched by a mob after being accused of raping a white woman. In 1989, Tennessee approached a self-styled execution device dealer Fred A. Leuchter Jr., to rebuild the chair. He did



Kelley Henry, Zagorski's attorney. She told reporters the world was no safer following the execution

so utilising wood from the original.

However, days before the execution, Leuchter told the Associated Press that the chair was "defective and shouldn't be used." In the end, though, it appears to have worked as intended.

Zagorski was originally scheduled to die on October 11th, 2018, but the governor granted him an 11th-hour reprieve to give executioners time to prepare for an electrocution.

Media witnesses described his final moments. NewsChannel 5's Jason Lamb said that as Zagorski sat in the chair before the execution, the inmate looked at his attorney, Kelley Henry, who'd been with him minutes earlier as guards strapped him into the chair. According to Lamb, she nodded, smiled, and tapped her chest over her heart.

"We did have the understanding that if I was placing my hand over my heart, that meant I was holding him in my heart," she explained later.

Another journalist, Adam Tamburin, described Zagorski grimacing as guards fastened on to his head a helmet and a sponge soaked in saline solution – to help conduct the electricity. As the solution ran down his face, guards wiped it off. Minutes later, Tamburin said, witnesses saw a guard plug in the chair.

According to reporters, Zagorski's arms appeared to turn red as the first cycle of 1,500 volts of electricity began to race through his body. He rose up slightly in the chair, his whole body tense as the current travelled through him. There

was a brief pause, his belly continuing to rise and fall, indicating that he was still breathing. Then a second cycle of 1,500 volts hit home. The double-killer was pronounced dead at 7.26 p.m.

Attorney Henry said the dead man was loved by many and leaves behind numerous friends. "The world is not safer because of his execution, and justice was not served tonight."

He was indeed well liked by his fellow-Death Row prisoners and a large group of people against executions turned up to mourn his

"He had no remorse for what he did. He was smiling just like he was when he was caught. He got just what he deserved"

passing at Riverbend Prison, Nashville. Two men there took a more enthusiastic approach to the execution.

"It's not gonna make a difference!" one of them shouted as the execution neared. "We're gonna kill your boy tonight! He's got five minutes left!" and "I hope he catches on fire!" "Pray for the victims!" they both shouted.

Zagorski did not testify at his trial in 1984, but questions about what exactly happened that night in the woods of Hickman County

have been raised in court filings and by advocates over the years. Zagorski gave different versions of his role in the events after his arrest. His lawyers have challenged a confession he gave, as well as other damaging statements, arguing they were the result of horrible mistreatment in a Robertson County jail.

A court file read: "Zagorski was placed in solitary confinement in an unventilated metal hotbox for seven weeks during the heat of the summer, which decimated him physically and mentally, made him mentally ill and suicidal, and led him to give statements in order to end the unbearable conditions."

His upbeat attitude – his smile and seemingly unfazed attitude as death approached – did not sit well with the families of the two men he was convicted of killing. For them, the past 34 years have consisted of a horrible wound that begins to close, only to be reopened by another appeal, another court hearing, another graphic news report of two murders that had changed their lives forever.

Kim Dotson Rochelle, the daughter of John Dale Dotson, told *The Tennessean*: "He had no remorse for what he did. He was smiling just like he was when he was caught. He got just what he deserved."

Zagorski had family too. Kelley Henry said that in the days leading up to the execution, he had received messages from his ailing mother, as well as other relatives.

Whatever the state of his conscience, he seems to have been concerned about the burden that might have been weighing on others. Describing the moment when prison guards came to his cell before the procession to the execution chamber, Ms. Henry said Zagorski addressed them:

"I want to make it very clear I have no hard feelings. I don't want any of you to have this on your conscience. You are all doing your job. I'm good."

Edmund Zagorski was the first Tennessee inmate to die in the chair since 2007. The one previous to that was back in 1960. His last words: "Let's rock."

MIDWIFE'S KILLER WAS CRUEL FIEND

Time and time again we read of killers trying to cover up their ghastly deeds and going about their everyday lives as if nothing had happened. It takes a very strange person, to say the least, to behave in this manner but it occurs over and over again through the annals of murder history. In the case of *"Murder Of A Midwife"* (March), Michael Stirling, after having an affair with his brother-in-law's fiancée, Samantha Eastwood, a midwife at Royal Stoke University Hospital, panicked, in my opinion, when he realised the affair had gone too far. Samantha had called off her wedding, which suggests she was in love with Stirling. They argued and Stirling, in a fit of rage, strangled Samantha.



**Strangler:
Michael
Stirling**

What happened afterwards demonstrated the cruelty of Stirling. He bunged Samantha's lifeless body into his jeep and went to dinner with his wife's parents. He also kept texting Samantha's sister, pretending to be Samantha, and saying she was going through a bad time and everything would work out. He buried Samantha in a shallow grave and had the gall to visit it on his bike for reasons unknown. All the time he was under police surveillance. It's also shocking to note that Stirling's barrister tried to blame Samantha for her own murder. It was as if she asked for it! The only thing Samantha had done wrong was to fall for a cold, cruel fiend named Michael Stirling.

Michael Minihan, Limerick

MURDER OF A KENSINGTON WIDOW

I've just come across the most amazing list of characteristics attributed to one particular murderer, and I think we must have here the ingredients of a fascinating story: self-interest, self-pity, self-deception, self-dramatisation, stupidity, conceit, mendacity, charm and indolence. His name was Harold Trevor, and he murdered Theodora Jessie Greenhill, a 65-year-old widow of West Kensington, London, on Tuesday, October 14th, 1941. Does *True Crime* have details?

Stuart Davies, Barnstaple

You're right, Mr. D., it's a fascinating case. Watch out for a full account of the case in a future edition!

HOW DID HE KILL SO MANY?

Reading in *Chronicles Of Crime* (February) about ex-boxer Samuel Little, who is suspected of being involved in the murders of 90 women across the USA, got me thinking about serial killers who kill in very high volume. How do these people manage to get away with it for so long and rack up such a high body count? Are they that smart? Is it just blind luck? Or maybe police incompetence? The whole subject is fascinating.

Luke Hollifield, Bargoed

As our report states, it seems that Little preyed upon vulnerable women. Fortunately, he will never taste freedom again.

JUST DESERTS FOR EXECUTED KELLY

During her years on Death Row, Kelly Gissendaner found God and became a self-appointed ministering angel to her fellow-inmates (*"Even The Pope Couldn't Save 'Killer' Kelly"* – January). Why on earth would anyone doubt her motives or sincerity? Perhaps because of what I call the "glory-seeker's syndrome" – when someone emerges as the cheerleader for a worthy cause. The halo tarnishes when it's someone who, in reality, wouldn't help anyone. The common denominator here is self-interest.

When Doug Gissendaner met Kelly, for him love arrived and common sense departed. Kelly had a child from a previous relationship when they married, and soon they had their own child.

WHEN WONEY WENT BE

Tom Prior's enjoyable run-through of British gangster Owney Madden's life mentioned his support of George Raft (Ranft) and Mary Jane "Mae" West (*"Owney Madden: From Wigan To the West Side – A Gangster's Life"* – March). When Mae was given 10 days' imprisonment or a fine in 1926 on a morals charge, she could have paid the fine but she opted for jail instead – for the free publicity. Each night she dined with Warden Henry Schleth.

"A woman of wonderful character," he concluded. She was released two days early. "It's the first time I've been given something for good behaviour," she said, as she waved the warden goodbye.

George got her a part in the movie *Night After Night* (1932). She wrote her own script and knocked them dead. "She stole everything but the cameras," George lamented. When she appears at a night club in her first scene in furs and diamonds, the hat check girl says, "Goodness, what lovely diamonds." Mae replies, "Goodness had nothing to do with it, dearie."

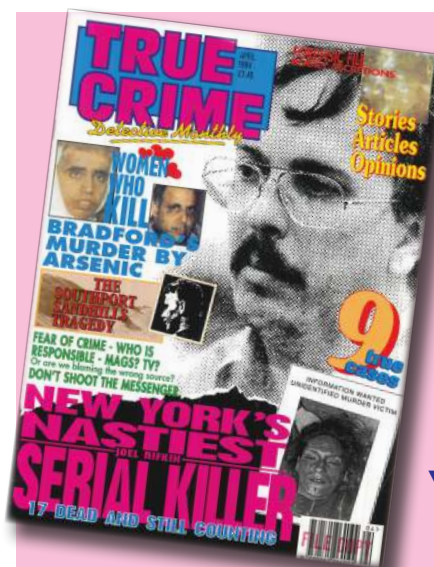
After Mae's shift to Hollywood and Owney's move to Hot Springs, they drifted apart. Mae lived the high life, starred at Vegas and mixed with the likes of Bugsy Siegel and William Randolph Hearst. Did she regret leaving Owney behind? Probably not. "Women like a man with a past, but they prefer a man with a present," she said.

Andrew Stephenson, Newhaven



OWNEY'S TOUGH NEW YORK LIFE

Regarding *"Owney Madden: From Wigan To the West Side – A Gangster's Life"*: Since watching Martin Scorsese's film *Gangs Of New York* several years ago, I've been fascinated by the history of tenement and gangland life in 19th and early 20th-century New York. The photograph of "Hell's Kitchen" was taken by New York policeman Jacob Riis for his book *How The Other Half Lives*, published in 1890, around the time of Owney Madden's birth. Hell's



25 years ago
this month...
True Crime
magazine,
April 1994

**ALL OUR
YESTERDAYS**

DERFUL MAE HIND BARS



Above, Mae West and George Raft in *Night After Night*. Inset left, Owney Madden

Kitchen was truly a hellhole – many immigrants arriving in New York from European shores seeking a better life found themselves living in overcrowded tenements in indescribable squalor and paying exorbitant rents to unscrupulous landlords.

Owney's tough start in life helped him to survive. To belong to a gang such as the Gophers (there were countless gangs with bizarre names) was the only way to survive in a city built on violence.

I'm interested to read of Owney's association with George Raft (Ranft), whose later film career, usually portraying "tough guys," echoed his earlier life.

Owney's relatively long life and peaceful natural death was due to the stability of his happy marriage to sweet-faced Agnes Demby. It may have seemed an "odd match" but they were obviously soul-mates, as seen in their photograph together on page 21.

B. Waters, Inverness

When Doug joined the army, Kelly re-lived the single life. Less than two years after his return home the couple divorced. Now Kelly joined the army, but realised she'd made a mistake and took the only way out, getting pregnant and giving birth to another soldier's child.

A few years later Kelly and Doug remarried despite Kelly now being in a relationship with Greg Owen. Within four months she left Doug and returned to Owen. Incredibly, Doug took her back again. Kelly and her lover conspired to murder Doug, with Owen committing the actual murder. Facing conviction, Owen accepted a plea-bargain. Gambling with death, Kelly refused a similar deal, and was given the death sentence which was eventually enforced. Ironically, a death penalty opponent is pictured with a placard stating, "Kelly Is Loved." Doug Gissendaner loved Kelly, so much that it cost him his life.

Ann Nicholl, Strabane

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**MAJOR BRITISH
MURDER CASES**



20 Years On...

Will We Ever Know Who Killed Jill?

SHE HAD just arrived home after a visit to the shops and was about to unlock her front door when she was grabbed from behind. With his right arm, the killer held her and forced her to the ground, so that her face almost touched the tiled step of the porch. Then, with his left hand, he fired a single shot at her left temple, killing her instantly.

The bullet entered her head just above her ear, parallel to the ground, and came out the right side of her head.

It might have been just another big city murder, but this was different. For the victim was Jill Dando, a household name in Britain who came into your living-room several nights a week on the television, where her blonde good looks and easy-going temperament enchanted audiences.

She was Britain's most popular TV presenter and her star status at the BBC was growing ever larger. When she was shot dead on the doorstep of her west London home the nation was stunned. Two decades on from the tragedy, who murdered her – and why – remains a troubling mystery

She was both presenter and newsreader, but in particular she was the anchor for the BBC's *Crimewatch* programme. As such every week she dealt with the stories of crime victims, and no one could have imagined that on a bright spring morning she would tragically become one of the victims

herself.

Everyone was mourning, everyone was asking, who killed Jill Dando? There were all sorts of theories – a jealous boyfriend, an embittered *Crimewatch* crook she might have helped to send to jail, a stalker, a deranged fan, a professional rival, and so they went on.

Most of them were dismissed one after the other as not being quite plausible.

Only a small handful of facts were beyond dispute, and they were known right from the start: that Jill was shot at point-blank range with a semi-automatic 9 mm pistol outside her home at 29 Gowan Avenue, Fulham, at about 11.30 a.m. on Monday, April 26th, 1999.

All the rest was speculation, and has been for the past 20 years.

Despite the gun having no silencer, no shot was heard. Did she know her killer? No one knows. Only a short scream was heard.

Forensic study indicated that the gun was pressed against her head at the moment of the shot. Her next-door neighbour heard a surprised cry from Jill, "like someone greeting a friend,"

Police forensic officers at the scene of the shooting in Gowan Avenue, Fulham. Far left, a CCTV image of Jill Dando shopping on the morning of her murder. Below, how millions remembered her PA



examination of all her private papers produced nothing to substantiate that theory.

Jill Dando was born in Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, in 1961 – she was 37 when she was murdered. She began her working life as a trainee reporter for the local weekly newspaper, and five years later became a newsreader for BBC Radio Devon. In early 1988 she moved to national TV as a BBC newsreader.

Then came *Breakfast Time*, *Breakfast News*, the travel programme *Holiday*, occasional *Songs of Praise*, and *Crimewatch*. She was BBC Personality of the Year in 1997.

Men were always attracted to Jill Dando. A Russian Mafia boss made a clumsy public pass at her when she was filming a holiday programme in Cyprus. She

With his right arm, the killer held her and forced her to the ground. Then with his left hand he fired a single shot at her left temple. Despite the gun having no silencer, no shot was heard

but heard no gunshot. He saw a white man, 6ft tall, around 40 years old, walking away from the murder house.

At first sight the notion that the motive was tied in with Jill's role in *Crimewatch* didn't seem probable. After all, the programme would continue to identify and jail criminals whether she was on it or not. No sensible criminal would consider Jill personally responsible for his undoing – a detective or an informer would be a more likely target.

But it has since emerged that the underworld was delighted about the killing, particularly those members of it who were caught by the programme. There were a number of them, and some were high-profile.

It wasn't just because it had a high success rate



that criminals detested the programme, it was also because it encouraged grassing – a heinous crime in the underworld. One retired crook said he regarded *Crimewatch* with the kind of revulsion others would

reserve for a show in praise of paedophiles.

Only three months before she died Jill Dando spoke of being targeted because of her role in the programme that had helped to put many behind bars. She said the series had taught her there were "some very sick people out there."

Another lead stemmed from her rejection of some former lover. She had been in a number of relationships – at least three of them had been serious. But crimes of passion aren't usually executed with a single shot, fired coldly and calmly. They are generally violent bloodbaths.

Many detectives and criminologists believed that the solution to the mystery lay somewhere in Jill's private life, and that sex came into it. But a painstaking

rejected him just as publicly, a fact that didn't pass unnoticed.

So did a spurned and angry suitor kill her? That could have been someone perhaps who may have been irked by the fact that she was looking forward to her marriage in six months' time to Dr. Alan Farthing, a London gynaecologist she met on a blind date in October, 1997.

Jill had recently spent most nights with him at his home in Chiswick, going back to her own house in Fulham infrequently. Her visits to Gowan Avenue were random. No one knew when to expect her, so it seemed that on the day she was shot she must have been followed.

This brings in the Serbian connection. Jill had recently fronted a TV appeal for Kosovan refugees, helping to

raise more than £10 million. Then NATO bombed Belgrade's TV studios, killing 17 employees.

The idea of a revenge attack on a prominent BBC TV journalist began to gather credibility. Next came a phone call to the BBC from a man claiming to speak on behalf of a Serb death squad. "We killed Jill Dando," he said. "We will kill Tony Hall [boss of BBC News] next."

Serbian community leaders in London dismissed



Above, flowers left in tribute to Jill. Left, the presenter on a holiday programme. Right, an E-fit of the suspect

of securing the bullet in place. This indicated that the bullet was removed from its case in order to reduce the powder charge to make the shot quieter. If this were all true, the man who handled the murder weapon was an expert in guns, and that points to a professional criminal, and very possibly to a foreign one.

Two months after the shooting a Serb was arrested in Manchester as he was about to leave the country. He was said to resemble the E-fit picture of the wanted man, but the officers investigating the Dando murder didn't question him.

Curiously, they had made it clear from the outset that the "Serbian connection"



the call as a hoax. But prudently Mr. Hall and his family were moved to a safe house and given police protection. And it emerged that Jill Dando had received a letter from Serb extremists protesting about her fund-raising for Kosovan refugees.

A clue may lie in the type of gun used. A 9 mm semi-automatic pistol is extremely difficult for anyone outside the criminal fraternity to come by. Serbian criminals based in London could have got hold of one.

Bullets used by the Spetsnaz, the Soviet equivalent of the SAS, were said often to bear markings like

those found on the casing left by Jill's killer. And the Spetsnaz was a natural recruiting-ground for the Russian Mafia – which takes us back to that embarrassing episode in Cyprus.

Two months after the shooting it was disclosed

that some of the marks on the ejected cartridge found at the crime scene were unique, and could have been made by either the killer or the ammunition's supplier.

The indentations appeared to have been made with a small tool with the object

wasn't one of their lines of inquiry. In fact, a national criminal intelligence service report stated that a Serbian warlord had ordered her assassination in retaliation for the bombing of the Belgrade TV station.

As if the warlord and his men needed reminding about their target, Jill's picture made the front cover of the *Radio Times* in the week she was killed. It was also pointed out that the former Communist regime in Yugoslavia (of which Serbia had been part) had a history of assassinations directed against its opponents. Between 1946 and 1991 its secret service had carried out at least 150 assassination attempts against people living outside Yugoslavia.

The attacks were often made as targets entered or left their homes, since this was the point at which they were most



vulnerable and where a case of mistaken identity was least likely.

Against this theory, however, was the fact that no group ever credibly claimed responsibility for the killing. It was argued that there would be no point in carrying out a revenge killing without claiming responsibility.

The police investigation focused on who might have seen what at the moment of the shooting: who was in Gowan Avenue; had they been seen there before, that sort of thing.

Forty minutes before the shooting a postman noticed a “Mediterranean-looking” man outside the Dando house, apparently watching it or waiting for someone.

A traffic warden saw a man in a dark jacket sitting in a metallic blue Range Rover parked illegally outside the house. About 10 minutes after that a woman motorist in Gowan Avenue was tailgated by two men in a blue Range Rover.

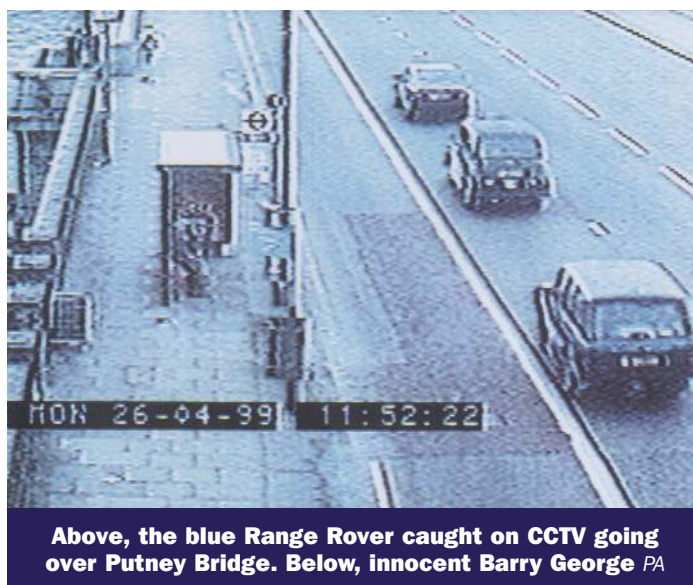
About 11 a.m. a woman parked outside No. 29 noticed a man looking at the house. After that, another motorist saw a man standing between two cars outside Jill’s house.

Within minutes of the shooting, a woman at Gowan Avenue’s junction with Munster Road saw a man wearing glasses that seemed too big for him. He was standing on the corner, and appeared agitated.

At about the same time two of Jill’s neighbours saw a man running away towards Fulham Palace Road, at the other end of Gowan Avenue. During the next few minutes there were four sightings of a man running down Fulham Palace Road towards Bishop’s Park, and shortly afterwards a man with a mobile phone was seen climbing over the park’s railings.

Then at 11.45 an agitated man, perspiring profusely, emerged from the park and was seen waiting at a bus stop in Fulham Palace Road.

A few people in the Gowan Avenue area were in a bit of a hurry all of a sudden, it seemed. None of them may have been the killer, but the neighbour living opposite Jill’s house reported someone whose behaviour was certainly



suspicious.

This neighbour said he was leaving his house at the time of the shooting when he saw a man starting to run fast. “Then he heard my gate click. He looked in my direction and saw me, and slowed down to a slower jog.”

The man seen by Jill’s next-door neighbour wasn’t running. This neighbour heard the familiar double bleep of Jill’s car alarm being primed, followed by a scream about 30 seconds later. He recalled: “I looked out of my window and saw a man walking briskly away in a Barbour jacket. He was in his mid-thirties, thick-set and carrying a phone. I opened my door and saw Jill lying on the doorstep. There was blood everywhere.”

An ambulance was called and she was rushed to hospital, where she died at 1.03 p.m.

Put just some of these sightings together and you get the sort of scenario familiar in a Balkan assassination. Such attacks were usually carried out by small teams consisting of a trigger-man supported by a spotter and were always carefully planned. If this were a Serb assassination, there would probably have been two spotters, one at each end of Gowan Avenue.

This, though, was a line of inquiry discarded by the police, who in this period were not enjoying the best of good fortune. In more than one murder inquiry investigators appeared to be engaging in startling flights of speculation, with the result that completely

innocent men were arrested, accused, and imprisoned.

This was the case with the Jill Dando investigation.

By any measurement the prosecution’s case against Barry George was woefully weak. It appeared to be based on a speck of



gunpowder found in one of his pockets which, it was rather desperately claimed, was “not dissimilar” to particles found in Miss Dando’s hair, and could have come from the murder weapon.

No one could say for certain that it did come from the murder weapon; indeed, no one could be certain about anything in the prosecution’s case against George.

Barry George was no more than an obsessive loner who happened to live about 500 yards away from Gowan Avenue and whose behaviour attracted others’ suspicions. He had been a stalker and he was a bit of an attention-seeker. On this

basis, and on nothing much else, he was arrested a year after the murder, brought to trial, found guilty and sentenced to life.

As soon as the guilty verdict was given – it took the jury a staggering five days to come up with it – there was widespread disquiet, notably in the “serious” newspapers.

The Sunday Telegraph noted that no one saw George commit the crime. No one identified him as being near Jill Dando’s home in the vital half-hour before she was killed, and the two witnesses who thought they saw the gunman walking away failed to identify George as the man they had seen.

There were essentially four reasons why Barry George could not have killed Jill Dando, and all were aired at his trial.

The first stems from the prosecution’s claim that eye-witnesses put him in Gowan Avenue at the time

“I looked out of my window and saw a man walking briskly away. He was in his mid-thirties, thick-set and carrying a phone. I saw Jill lying on the doorstep. There was blood everywhere”

of the murder.

In fact, 12 witnesses that the judge allowed to give evidence were not 100 per cent sure the man they identified was Barry George. One witness said she saw him at 7 a.m., but George was still in bed then. “I don’t get up until about 9 a.m.,” he said.

Secondly, the prosecution maintained that George was not at a disabled charity premises at the time of Miss Dando’s murder, as he had claimed.

George said of that: “The place was still locked at 10 a.m. and I had to be let in. They considered me a nuisance but I finally saw someone. I was there for about two hours.”

Third, there was the incident of the speck of gunpowder in his pocket, described as the firearms residue. It tied him in to a possible murder weapon, the jury were told.

But George said the speck of gunpowder must have come from an armed officer who raided his flat. The police denied any officers were armed – but later new witnesses came forward to say that they were.

Finally, said the prosecution, the identification parades established his guilt. But the parades were distinctly unreliable because they took place a year after the murder. George said of them: “I was told to wear a coat. That was ridiculous. On the day Jill was murdered I was wearing a yellow fluorescent T-shirt.

On August 1st, after two days’ deliberation, the jury found him not guilty. He stood in the dock as if in shock. His eyes welled with tears and he gasped, “I can’t believe it”

It was very bright. How could they miss me if I was there?”

So why did the jury convict him on such slender evidence?

Like the police, they were under pressure. Someone out there had deprived Miss Dando’s family, friends and public of the woman described by the judge as “a much-loved and popular personality who, in the time she was in the public eye, had done a great deal of good, and brought a lot of pleasure to a huge number of people.”

These people were baying for her killer to be brought to justice. And a senior police officer believed Barry George was the killer and had brought him to court. It was for the judge and jury to do the rest.

An acquittal would not be popular. The public wanted closure. That was the pressure the jury were

“YES, SERBS KILLED JILL,” SAYS SERB WIDOW

Jill Dando – she made an appeal on behalf of Kosovan-Albanian refugees



A Serbian hit-man did kill Jill Dando. That is the claim of a Serbian widow whose husband was murdered in almost identical circumstances.

She was with her journalist husband, who was an outspoken critic of the Serbian regime, when he was shot dead outside their Belgrade home on April 11th, 1999 – that is, 15 days before Jill was murdered in London.

She believes Jill became a target after the BBC appeal on behalf of Kosovan-Albanian refugees, and it was “quite possible” that they were killed by Slobodan Milosevic’s henchmen on the dictator’s orders. “There is a link between the two killings,” she said in February 2012. “They were both executed. Both were journalists with high profiles and had upset the Serbian regime in differing ways.”

Both were returning home when they were approached from behind, forced to the ground and shot at close range through the head. And both died instantly.

According to the widow, Jill’s appearance in the TV appeal made her a prime target for supporters of the Serbian regime and she thinks that the regime would have taken pleasure from the “shock value” of murdering Jill on her own doorstep.

The explanation for the killing, she said, lay in the idea of power. “They are thinking, ‘I will kill you in your own country, look how powerful I am.’”

She said her husband’s death was all over in a second. He was holding her hand when he started to fall. “I turned to see what was going on, and was hit on my head with a gun. While falling to the ground I saw a faceless person in a black jacket and black cap. While I was lying at my husband’s side, the person approached us and shot him in the head.” JS

under, together with the knowledge that if Barry George were free he could not be tried again for the murder; and if he were guilty those who acquitted him would have enabled him to get away with it.

None of this should have influenced the jury, and it may not have done. But juries are only human. The judge urged them to concentrate on the evidence and exclude everything else from their minds, but this was a tall order.

The judge also told them: “The prosecution has to prove its case against Barry George. He does not have to prove anything. The burden of proving his guilt remains on the prosecution from beginning to end and the standard of proof is a high one. You have to be satisfied you are sure of his guilt.”

When the jury returned their guilty verdict they were apparently satisfied that the “high standard of proof” had been achieved. How they reached that

questionable conclusion remains a mystery, and it surely must bring nearer the day when juries have to reveal the reasons for reaching their decisions.

In 2002 George’s appeal against his conviction was dismissed. Four years later his lawyers submitted new evidence to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. The conviction was referred to the Appeal Court and in 2007 George’s second appeal was upheld and a retrial was ordered after forensic scientists testified that the particle of firearms residue found in his pocket was so small it could have got there simply by his sitting on a bus or a train.

When his retrial began on June 9th, 2008, the judge ruled the Crown’s firearms residue evidence inadmissible, leaving the prosecutors with little more than circumstantial evidence confined to Barry George’s reputation as a stalker who was obsessed with celebrities and fascinated by firearms.

On August 1st, after two days’ deliberation, the jury found him not guilty. He stood in the dock as if in shock. His eyes welled with tears and he gasped, “I can’t believe it.”

His seven years in jail as an innocent man was a terrible price to pay for so many law enforcement blunders. The fact that Jill Dando’s killer will almost certainly never be found reinforces the theory that it was a revenge attack for the NATO bombing of the Belgrade TV centre – the one theory the police threw out.

Pressure for closure was the key phrase in the murder, and it follows that underlying the trial of Barry George is the dangerous fixation the public at all social levels have with the very ordinary people who become TV “celebrities.”

Would the pressure have been so great, would an arrest so absurd, and a trial so muddled, have happened if Jill Dando had been a counter assistant in a convenience store in the Fulham Palace Road? If the answer to that question is no, then we are not all equal before the law, as the law says we should be.

CHRONICLES OF CRIME

True Crime's monthly diary of criminal events day by day as they were reported in the national newspapers. This month, news from around the world in **February and March 2019**. Researched by Richard Sharpe

February 1st MECHANIC'S KILLER FACES LIFE IN JAIL

STEVEN SIDEBOTTOM, who murdered a mechanic to fund a lifestyle he couldn't afford, faces life behind bars.

The 25-year-old had denied killing Brian McKandie, 67, at his home in Badenscoth, Scotland, on March 11th, 2016. But he was found guilty after a trial at the High Court in Aberdeen.

The court was told that Mr. McKandie was the victim of a "savage" attack which began outside his house and continued into the hall. He was found dead the following day by customers but, despite the bloody scene, police initially believed the death was an accident.

When a post-mortem showed that Mr. McKandie had died as a result of 15 blows to the head, a murder inquiry was launched.

Hundreds of thousands of pounds in cash was found in sweet tins, biscuit tins and shoe boxes at the property. His estate was valued at more than £800,000.

The gentleman mechanic was well known in the area for carrying out cash-in-hand repair jobs.

Mobile phone records placed Sidebottom near the scene at the time of the murder. He'd also been seen with a wad of thousands of pounds in notes around the time of the killing.

Text messages showed Sidebottom had been planning a "job" that would involve him "doing someone in" to recover cash.

The jury deliberated for 11-and-a-half hours before finding him guilty of murder.



Above, killer Steven Sidebottom. Below, victim Brian McKandie



BURGLAR HAD SEX WITH WOMAN'S CORPSE

February 2nd BURGLAR KHASIM

Khuram, who had sex with a corpse after breaking into a Birmingham funeral parlour, has been locked up for six years. The 23-year-old, who was in a drug-induced psychosis at the time, had



Sexual offence: Khasim Khuram

sex with a woman's body after lifting the lids of coffins at the Central England Co-operative undertakers on November 11th, 2018.

He was sentenced at Birmingham Crown Court. Judge Melbourne Inman said the crimes "offend all human sensitivity."

Khuram, who had admitted sexual penetration of a body and burglary, was also put on the sex offenders' register.

MONSTER STABS MUM OF THREE

February 6th

A HARTLEPOOL man who stabbed his ex-girlfriend to death after she had ended their abusive 12-year relationship has been jailed for life. "Sex-obsessed narcissist" Torbjorn Kettlewell, 30, murdered Kelly Franklin, 29, the mother of his three children, on August 3rd last year.



Teesside Crown Court heard that the killer was assisted by a new lover, who told Kettlewell where he could find his victim and drove him to and from the scene in Oxford Street, Hartlepool. She was found guilty of manslaughter and jailed for eight years.

Prosecutor Jamie Hill QC said Kettlewell, who had



Above, the crime scene in Hartlepool. Left, top to bottom, killer Torbjorn Kettlewell and victim Kelly Franklin

changed his birth name from Ian because of a video game character, was "utterly self-centred and narcissistic."

The court heard that the couple's relationship had ended in January 2018.

Kettlewell denied murder on the grounds of diminished responsibility but jurors found him guilty.

Miss Franklin was stabbed 32 times in the attack, which caused catastrophic blood loss.

Kettlewell was jailed for a minimum of 29 years.

PAEDOPHILES EXECUTED

February 8th

TWO MEN who raped and murdered a 12-year-old boy have been executed in public by the military in the Yemen.

Wadah Refat, 28, and Mohamed Khaled, 31, had

been convicted of raping and murdering their victim, Mohamed Saad, in May 2018.

Hundreds gathered in the city of Aden to watch the men being shot dead.

February 9th GRANDMA MURDERED AND DISMEMBERED CONVICTED KILLER

Andrew Wallace, 42, has been jailed for a minimum of 28 years after pleading guilty to stabbing a grandmother to death and dismembering her body.

Wallace, who was found guilty of culpable homicide of another woman in 1992 when he was 15, murdered Julie Reilly, 47, in her Govan flat in February 2018.

The High Court in Glasgow was told that Julie, who had a brain injury, was befriended by Wallace in December 2017. She allowed him to stay with her at her home in Shieldhall Road. She was last seen on February 6th, 2018, and police were later alerted that she was missing.



Above, killer Andrew Wallace. Below, victim Julie Reilly



The court heard that Wallace

stabbed Julie to death and cut off her legs with a knife. He then put the rest of her remains in bags and suitcases and buried them around Glasgow.

The killer was told by Judge Lady Rae that he was guilty of "an evil and despicable act."

Wallace had initially denied murder but pleaded guilty before his trial began.

Part of Julie's body was found in a garden. Wallace was arrested for murder after the discovery of two leg bones close to his victim's home.

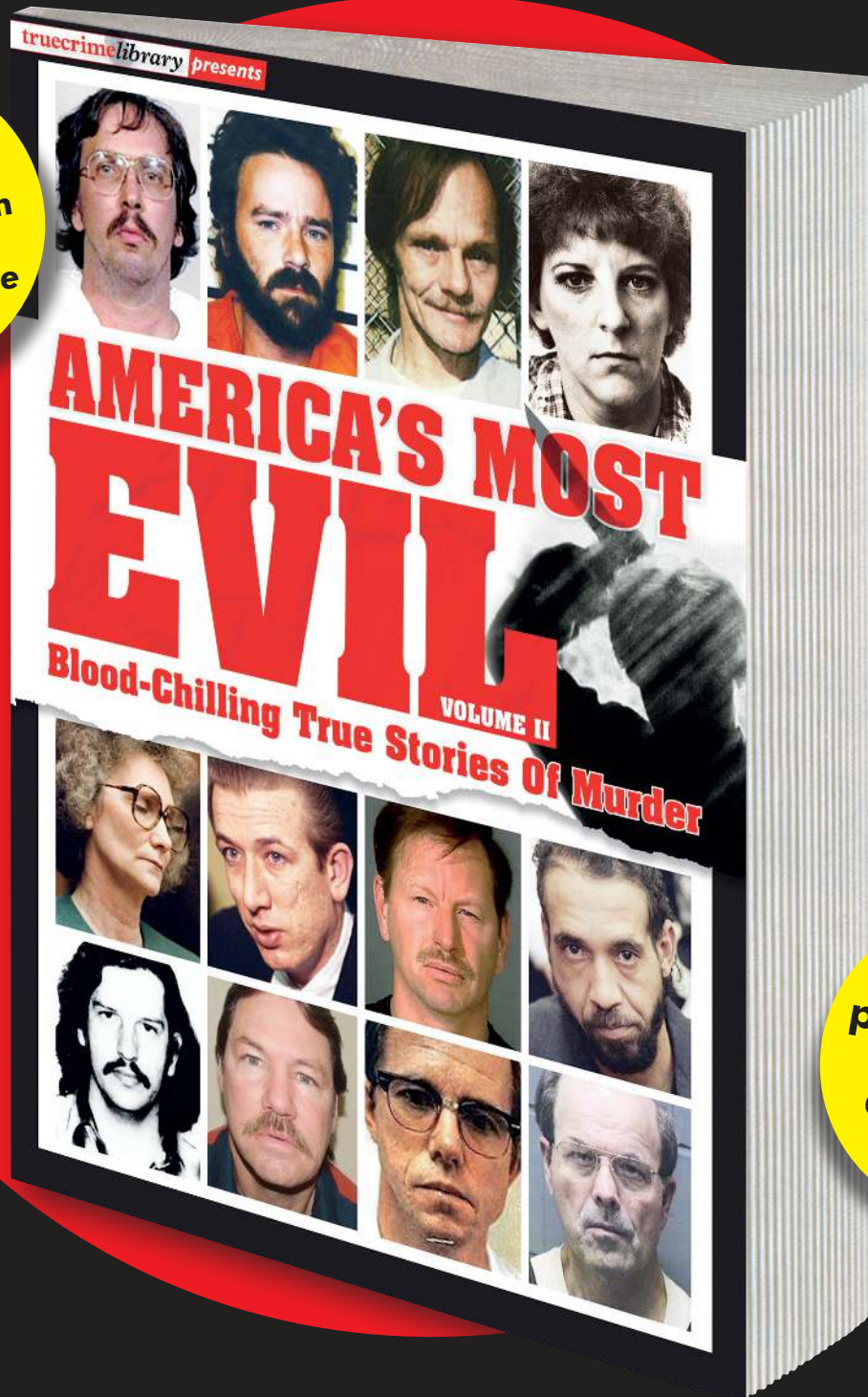
The judge told Wallace: "You are a dangerous man who has a considerable propensity for violence."

● more Chronicles on page 21

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Three Weddings And A Shooting

As they sat in their death cells awaiting the executioner, both men could ruminate on how they came to be there – through their jealousy over a woman, “that great power that is the cause of so many crimes in the world...”



The White Horse pub in Market Deeping where tragedy unfolded in 1922. Inset left, killer Frank Fowler and his victim Ivy Darcy

ROMANCE WAS decidedly in the air at the White Horse pub. First, Lucy Darcy, the 27-year-old daughter of the landlady, tied the knot at the altar. Then, two months later, it was the turn of 18-year-old Ivy Darcy, the landlady's second daughter, who married the local barber. A week after that the landlady herself, Mrs. Edith Darcy, was to remarry.

Three weddings in the family! The drink flowed, the jokes cracked, the merriment rose to a crescendo. This was the scene in the summer and autumn at the pub in the Lincolnshire village of Market Deeping.

Only one customer seemed not to be enjoying himself. This was Frank Fowler, a

regular at the White Horse. From his seat in the corner of the bar he gazed sullenly on the scenes of rejoicing.

Everyone accepted that Fowler was a morose, miserable man. An ex-soldier, he had little to say, and few

Case reports by
Matthew Spicer

friends to say it to. Lately, though, he was gloomier than ever. There was a reason for that, and some of the regulars had guessed it.

Fowler, a 35-year-old farmworker, had fancied Ivy Darcy. Now the pretty, vivacious teenager, who was barmaid at the White Horse, had married the local barber George Prentice. And Ivy hadn't so much as cast a single backward glance at the heartbroken Fowler as she dashed off to the altar.

Who can guess about the state of mind of the angry, speechless farmworker? Only once did Fowler drop his guard in front of Ivy's bridegroom. "I'll have my

own back on you one day, you bugger," he said before once again clamping up.

He was in his corner seat in the bar as usual on July 24th, 1922, three days after Ivy's wedding and two days before landlady Edith Darcy was to tie the knot with another local man, James Kitchener. Edith was just about to start another celebratory party in a back room at the pub when Fowler appeared in the doorway.

The guests, gathering around the drinks table, looked up and froze. For the sullen farmworker was now holding a shotgun.

As he raised it to fire, a woman guest dived under a table. There was a tremendous explosion, and Ivy crumpled onto the

**THEY MET ON
THE GALLOWS**

carpet. Edith Darcy stepped forward and bravely seized the barrel of the gun, which fired again. The bullet hit no one, smashing a window.

Customers rushed in from the bar, surrounded Fowler and roughly disarmed him. Ivy's unmarried sister Gertrude spun round on Fowler. "Oh, you devil!" she cried. "You've killed her!"

"Yes," Fowler replied icily, "and I meant the other shot for your mother."

The shotgun blast had extinguished candles in the room and when a light was brought the quivering gunman turned towards the body of the three-day bride on the floor and said, "I've had my bloody revenge."

When police arrived, the victim's brother William Darcy told them that Fowler came into the pub at 6 p.m. He drank a shandy and the two had a brief conversation about the harvest. Fowler then left for a short while, and when he came back he had a pint of beer, served by Edith Darcy. At 9.15 he left the pub again, this time by a side door.

William said that when the family party began he was helping out behind the bar. About 9.30 he heard gunshots and a commotion in the back room, and it was he who fetched a light. When he shone it on the man with the gun he exclaimed in surprise, "Why, it's Frank Fowler!"

In the following five weeks the village buzzed with speculation about the killer's motive, and when his trial for murder began at Lincoln Assizes on October 31st, the court heard conflicting testimony.

Fowler pleaded not guilty; his defence, he said, was insanity. The *Lincolnshire Echo* reported: "The prisoner, a muscular man of average height and irregular features, had a countenance which seemed incapable of relaxation, and gave one the impression of never being caught smiling. He maintained a morose, sullen demeanour throughout the trial."

The court was told that Fowler helped his aunt, Mrs. Orman, run her small farm at Langtoft, near Market Deeping. The prosecution claimed that he shot Ivy because he wanted her, and his feelings were not reciprocated.



A handcuffed Frank Fowler is escorted by a constable back to jail after being charged with murder

Fowler's doctor told the court that the prisoner was "a simple sort of man, like many other villagers."

"He is perhaps slightly below average intelligence, but he is not mentally defective. His father was notable in the village for being an eccentric."

That view was broadly supported by Dr. F. S. Lambert, medical officer at Lincoln Prison, who had seen Fowler almost every day while he was in custody on remand.

"I sometimes kept him under observation without him realising it," the doctor said. "I saw no signs of mental problems. He has a deformed spine, but this would not affect his mentality, and he is physically as capable as any average

man."

Was there anything wrong with Fowler's mind? His widowed aunt, Ann Orman, thought there was. "When he came out of the Army he came to work on my farm, and his behaviour was odd

"On the day he shot Ivy he wouldn't eat anything. His manner would usually seem normal, but he could be very strange if crossed"

right from the start," she told the court.

"It gradually got worse, too. He complained of pains in his head. He would start cursing, and then suddenly change to singing a hymn."

"He would complain of feeling a bit odd. He would get up in the middle of the night, saying someone was peering through his bedroom window from the outside. I urged him to go and see a doctor but he just ignored me."

"A few months ago he shot one of my cats. Then one day after lunch he picked up a table knife, seized me by the wrist, and said he was going to cut my throat. I struggled with him and he put the knife down. A fortnight later he threatened again to cut my throat, and when I struggled with him he began singing."

"On the day he shot Ivy he wouldn't eat anything. His manner would usually seem normal, but he could be very strange if crossed."

Fowler's mother went into the witness-box to confirm her sister's account. She had seen one of her son's attacks on his aunt, and she thought he had been "very queer" since leaving the Army. He had not been born with a spinal deformity, she added. It had developed in later years.

"My husband was also sometimes queer," she volunteered. "Nineteen years ago he burned his bedclothes, and ever since then he behaved oddly from time to time."

Indeed there was no shortage of Fowler family members prepared to testify how queer their kinsman Frank was. Next up was his sister Hettie. She said Fowler came to her home one night in March just before midnight and tapped on the window. When she let him in he whispered, "Shh! Don't say anything. There's someone under the window!" She promptly went out to look and saw no one.

Still another witness remembered that both Frank Fowler and his dad were "comical in their ways."

Another doctor, Henry Turner, told the court that he had examined Fowler's father in 1903 and found him to be in "a doubtful mental condition."

He had informed the district health officer of this

view. "What I have heard at this trial prompts me to think that the accused man is mentally unstable," the doctor said.

The court then heard the testimony of Thomas Day, a local coal merchant. Day recalled hearing customers at the White Horse chaff Fowler about George Prentice keeping company with Ivy.

Day said that Fowler had tried to laugh this off, but in an unguarded moment he had pointed to his heart and admitted, "It sticks here."

Summing up for the defence, Mr. Lyons said the real issue was the state of his client's mind. He had shot Ivy Prentice without the slightest motive, and that was surely the act of a madman.

"He was neither Ivy's friend nor her enemy, nor was he a lover or a relative," said Mr. Lyons. "His act in shooting her in front of the household with no hope of escape showed that he was insane."

All the evidence about Fowler's state of mind was driven of course by the defence determination to escape the hangman, but prosecutor Richard O'Sullivan was dismissive about it. Fowler wasn't mad, he was jealous, Mr. O'Sullivan said.

The fact that Fowler had been teased about Ivy Prentice cutting him out indicated that he was attracted to her, the prosecutor claimed. "The shooting arose from jealousy, the most powerful passion in the world."

The judge, Mr. Justice Lush, agreed. "There is evidence of jealousy, a terrible power which has been the cause of crime since the world began," he declared.

There wasn't much hope for Fowler after that. The jury went out and were back within 30 minutes with a guilty verdict.

Sentencing him to death, the judge told him: "You have been most properly convicted of the terrible crime of murder. You went with that gun deliberately – you took that gun deliberately to that house that night for the purpose of murdering Ivy Prentice. It seems only too probable that you intended also to murder her mother.

"I will not dwell on the enormity of your crime. It



Above, Mrs. Edith Darcy attends the inquest into her daughter Ivy's death with her new husband James Kitchener. Below, Fowler's letter to his aunt

was a cruel murder. I can only beg of you to use the time that remains to you in seeking forgiveness for the terrible crime you have committed."

Fowler was taken back to Lincoln Prison where, from the condemned cell, he wrote to Mrs. Orman. We insert the punctuation to make it readable, leaving the spelling unchanged.

"Dear Aunt," the letter began, "just a few lines in ans to your letter, also hoping you are quite well in health as this leaves me quite well. I was in London last week end in Pentonville prison from saturday till monday. I saw my home as we passed Tallington. My friends will be here on Monday to visit me. Brother Robt is not married, he is living at home."

"My case was lost through

insufficient evidence as to the state of my mind. You said something about drink. It was admitted by mrs. Darcys son at Bourne police court that they were in the habit of putting something strong in my drink.

"As to father being a simple minded man, their lordships would find that he is crazed if they had seen as much of him as I have. I admit there is times when he knows what he is doing. He mostly shows signs of not knowing what hes doing between the full moon and the last quarter. He used to be more affected then. He has been seeks sometimes not knowing what hes been doing.

"If some people had done as they liked he would have been in a lunatic Asylum long ago, and yet the prosecution

laugh and say hes only simple minded.

"As I told you before, I don't know what happened at Darcys. I wonder what Mrs. Darcy thinks to it now. It is written thou shalt do good for evil but every time that woman crosses my mind I cant help uttering curses on her, as it has been her own evil doings. The Lord forgive me for uttering curses on her. The Lord will help me in my troubles.

"I hope we shall meet again in heaven. Goodbye, your affectionate Nephew F Fowler, No. 967, Lincoln Prison."

Jealousy... "a terrible power that has been the source of crime since the world began..." So said the judge who, only 24 hours earlier and in the same court, had sent the hangman another prisoner whose crime was driven by blind jealousy.

Like Ivy Prentice, Frances Pacey, the victim, was a teenager. Like Frank Fowler, George Robinson, the killer, was a Lincolnshire farm worker. Jealousy, it seems, raged around the farmlands of the county that summer of 1922.

George Robinson was 25, and Frances was a mere 16 when they started going out together. It didn't last long. The romance didn't mean much to Frances, but when she broke it off Robinson wanted to commit suicide.

The problem was that once Robinson decided that Frances belonged exclusively to him, he wanted to cut her off from the rest of the world. He didn't like her speaking to her girlfriends and he became paranoid when other men spoke to her.

Their social life ceased to exist for fear of being sociable. They stopped going to the village dance or to the annual fete in Dorrington village, where they both lived. The only place they went to in fact was church. Then, when their romance broke up only a few months after it started, Robinson, never a sociable person anyway, declared, "The best thing I can do is do away with myself!"

After that, Robinson never went to the home of Frances's parents, where he was once often seen, and he even stopped working. He seemed broody and

sulking, and in the small village everyone noticed his change of character. Once or twice he begged Frances to come back to him. Her short answer was always “No!”

In the summer she went away for almost two months, and by the time she came back on August 17th Robinson was hardly eating, and looking quite ill.

On Tuesday, September 5th, matters came to a head. William Brickles, who lived in the house next door to Frances, looked out of his window soon after 7.30 a.m. and was surprised to see George Robinson in his back garden.

A quarter of an hour later Mary Turner, Brickles’s neighbour, heard a frightening scream from the bedroom in Frances’s house. Seconds later, Frances, dressed only in her nightdress, came running, crying out, “Mrs. Turner, I’m done for!”

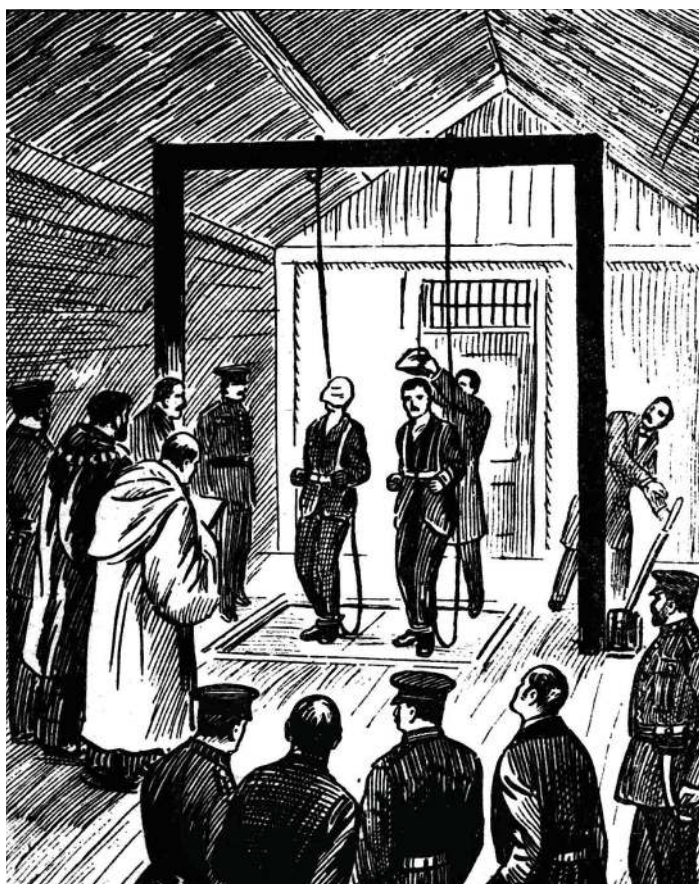
“She had a terrible injury in her neck, and blood was gushing from it,” Mrs. Turner said. “Then she collapsed and fell into the darkness beneath the shadow of the dining-room table, where I could hear her body thrashing about.”

Robinson was seen, running or fast walking, to his own home. He rushed into his kitchen, past his sister Mary Ann, and into his bedroom, where he changed his bloodsoaked shirt and fell into bed.

“There was blood everywhere,” Mary Ann recalled. “He had cut his throat. I found the bloodstained razor in the left-hand pocket of his coat.” She handed the razor to Police Constable Richard Burrell. Frances’s throat bore a ragged wound that matched the damaged blade.

The first thing the police noticed when they arrived was that Robinson’s clothes were wet through and hanging out to dry. Why, they asked Mary Ann? “Perhaps he jumped into the pond to wash the blood off,” she suggested. The officers didn’t believe her. They thought it more likely that she had washed her brother’s clothes to be rid of any evidence.

Mary Ann shook her head emphatically. “He hasn’t been the same since Frances Pacey stopped walking out with him,” she said.



A contemporary illustration of the double-execution of Frank Fowler and George Robinson

Dr. Charles Woods arrived on the scene. He noted that the wound on Frances’s neck was five inches long and two inches deep. The razor used to inflict it had severed the jugular vein. A local farmer took her to hospital in Lincoln, where she died at about 3 p.m.

Robinson was taken to the same hospital. All he could say when he arrived

his ex in her bedroom. There was no appearance of a struggle, although Robinson had left his cap on the bloodsoaked bedclothes.

So it was that the day before Frank Fowler was sentenced to death, on Monday, October 30th, 1922, George Robinson stood in the same dock at Lincoln Assizes pleading the same defence: insanity.

“Well, he isn’t insane,” said Dr. Frederick Lambert, medical officer at Lincoln Prison. “He’s an intelligent country type [the doctor wasn’t asked to define what that was]. He seems a bit down and a bit fed up, but he isn’t suffering even from depression.”

“Or from melancholia?” suggested the defence. Melancholia, it was claimed, was a form of insanity.

“I couldn’t see any sign of it,” said the doctor.

The defence countered with their own expert. He was Dr. David Hunter, manager of a mental home in Nottingham, who claimed to have been studying what he called “lunacy” for 30 years. He didn’t think the prisoner was completely sane. “Practically sane,” he suggested.

The judge, clearly irritated,

asked for clarification, whereupon the doctor said, “My opinion is that the man might have been insane.” But the shock of an attempted suicide could make an insane man sane again, “bringing him to his senses, if you like.”

More to the point, perhaps, was his view that in a tiny community like Dorrington the rejection by a young woman could send a young man over the edge. That’s what Robinson’s brother Joseph thought. “George was quite normal, a happy young man, but the rejection by Frances Pacey changed everything,” he told the jury.

“This is a weak defence,” the judge said in his summing-up, and the jury must have thought so too. They found Robinson guilty in just 13 minutes.

Sentencing him to death, Mr. Justice Lush told him: “I can only entreat you, in the time that remains, to seek forgiveness for the terrible crime you have committed.” It was clearly a stock phrase of his, because he said almost exactly the same thing to Frank Fowler after sentencing him to hang.

The Home Office asked to see Robinson’s medical records from his time in the Army, but could find nothing to show any sign of mental abnormality. Reviewing the case, a Home Office official wrote: “Girls must be protected against the danger of a man saying, ‘If I can’t have her, no one else shall.’”

George Robinson’s Death Row colleague Frank Fowler was set to join him next day – two men sharing a murderous delusional streak and an insanity plea, brought to the scaffold by their jealousy – “that great power that causes so many crimes” – over a woman.

In both cases an appearance at the appeal court failed. On December 13th, 1922, this was the first double execution at Lincoln Prison since the days of public hangings.

Both men were stoically calm. They told their relatives they were resigned to their fate and had repented their crimes. A witness said the execution, by Thomas Pierrepont and Robert Baxter, was carried out “with remarkable skill and expedition.”

“There was blood everywhere. He had cut his throat. I found the bloodstained razor in the left-hand pocket of his coat”

was, “How’s Fran?” His self-inflicted wound was superficial, and he was taken to Sleaford police station and charged with murder.

The police determined that Robinson went up the stairs in Frances’s home and killed

February 11th BANK GUNMAN COULD FACE DEATH PENALTY

ZEPHEN XAVER, a suspect charged with the execution-style killing of five women at a central Florida bank, could face the death penalty if



Above, the crime scene in Sebring. Below right, suspect Zephen Xaver

convicted.

The 21-year-old was arrested by police after the shooting on January 23rd at the SunTrust Bank in Sebring and charged with five counts of premeditated murder.

Authorities said that after shooting the women Xaver called police. Officers found the victims lying face-down in the lobby of the bank with gunshot wounds in their backs and heads.

The victims, who were a mix of employees and customers, were named as Ana Pinon-Williams, 38; Marisol Lopez, 55; Cynthia Lee Watson, 65; Debra Cook, 54 and Jessica Montague, 31.

When Xaver was arrested he was wearing a T-shirt bearing the image of four grim reapers on horseback, and a bullet-proof vest.

After a standoff with police negotiators, an armoured police vehicle rammed into the bank doors, and SWAT team members persuaded Xaver to give himself up.

Florida state attorney Brian Haas said that he would be seeking the death penalty.

"As this case moves forward, I will seek the ultimate punishment," he said.

Xaver is being held in a local jail.



February 12th "EL CHAPO" GUILTY OF DRUGS CHARGES

MEXICAN DRUGLORD Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán is expected to be imprisoned for life in the US after being found guilty of all charges at a drug-trafficking trial in New York.

The 61-year-old, who was extradited to the US in 2017, was convicted on numerous counts including the distribution of cocaine and heroin, illegal firearms possession and money-laundering. He will be sentenced in June.

At the Brooklyn Federal Courthouse he was found guilty of all charges, following an 11-week trial. The authorities accused him of being behind the Sinaloa drug cartel, which is the largest supplier of drugs to the US.

He was accused of having helped export hundreds of tonnes of cocaine into the US and of conspiring to



Guzmán seen in police custody during the trial

manufacture and distribute heroin, methamphetamine and marijuana.

He was also said to have used hit-men to carry out "hundreds" of murders, assaults, kidnappings and acts of torture on rivals.

Key associates, including one former lieutenant, testified against Guzmán.

El Chapo is likely to be imprisoned at America's most secure prison, the ADX Florence, in Colorado.

FIVE KILLED BY REDUNDANT CO-WORKER

February 16th

A DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE, who was going to be made redundant, shot dead five staff and injured several police officers at a manufacturing firm in Aurora, Illinois.

Gunman Gary Martin, 45, later died in a shoot-out with police near the Henry Pratt company building. The killer is believed to have struck with a Smith & Wesson handgun at a meeting in which he was to learn about losing his job.

According to authorities, Martin killed three of his victims in one room, a fourth nearby and a fifth on another floor.

The victims were named by police as Russell Beyer;



Above, armed police at the crime scene. Inset left, gunman Gary Martin

Vicente Juarez; Clayton Parks, the human resources manager; Josh Pinkard, the plant manager; and Trevor Wehner, a 21-year-old Northern Illinois University student intern who was on his first day at the company.

Martin, who had worked for the company for 15 years, shot five police officers but none of them were critically injured.

Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth said: "This is a scary, sad day for all Illinoisans and Americans."

February 13th TEXT MESSAGE KILLER FINALLY LOCKED UP

MICHELLE CARTER, the Massachusetts woman who sent her suicidal boyfriend text messages urging him to kill himself, has begun her 15-month prison sentence – nearly five years after he died.



Behind bars: Michelle Carter

Michelle Carter, 22, was taken into custody after a court upheld her manslaughter conviction in the 2014 death of Conrad Roy, 18.

Michelle was sentenced to 15 months in prison in 2017 after a judge ruled that she caused Conrad's death after telling him to "get back in" his truck that was filling with toxic gas after he told her he was scared.

February 16th CHERYL MURDER CHARGE DROPPED

PROSECUTORS IN Australia have dropped a case against a man accused of killing British-born girl Cheryl Grimmer.

Cheryl, three, originally from Bristol, disappeared from a beach in Wollongong, New South Wales, in January 1970. Her body has never been found.

In 2017, police arrested the man and he later pleaded not guilty to murder. Now, though, a judge has ruled that a key part of the prosecution case cannot be used as evidence in a trial. It concerned statements made by the man in 1970 when he was aged 17. No adult representative was present at the time of the interview.

Cheryl's surviving family commented that they were "devastated" following the ruling by the New South Wales Supreme Court.

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Tragic tot: Cheryl Grimmer



By Martin Lomax

ON BROOKLYN'S Pitkin Avenue, October 23rd is still recognised as a holiday of sorts. It commemorates a murder – just about the most welcome murder the people of Brownsville could ever hope for.

To understand that statement, it is necessary to understand Louis Alex Amberg. No one ever called Louis handsome or intelligent or, for that matter, even human. He was nicknamed “Pretty” as an open mockery to one of the most unattractive specimens of animal life ever to walk upright. As a matter of fact, Pretty was once approached by a representative from a circus and offered a job with them as the missing link! It



real Beauty and the Beast pairing/

But Pretty Amberg obviously saved his charm for female company. For competitors and enemies had a personality to match his looks. For it was not unheard of for Pretty to stroll into a cafeteria and amuse himself by walking around spitting into people's soup. If a customer had the audacity to object, Pretty would dump the contents of the plate in his lap.

This was Pretty's idea of a joke, although he got an even bigger charge out of murder

THE MOBSTER, THE STARLET –



is a mark of Pretty's intellect that he often bragged of this offer.

Still, Pretty would still be able to find beautiful young women willing to share his company – even would-be stars like Broadway starlet Rita Rio. They made a

and is believed to have been personally responsible for 100 such “belly laughs” in his lifetime.

Such was the make-up of the man who terrorised Brownsville in the 20s and early 30s. He feared no man and was once identified by Abe Reles, of Murder Inc. fame, as the one man that Reles feared. Bugs Goldstein, a true psychopathic killer who murdered gleefully at the drop of a hat, once got the soup treatment from Amberg and took it meekly.

During Prohibition, Amberg's main activities were in bootleg spirits and

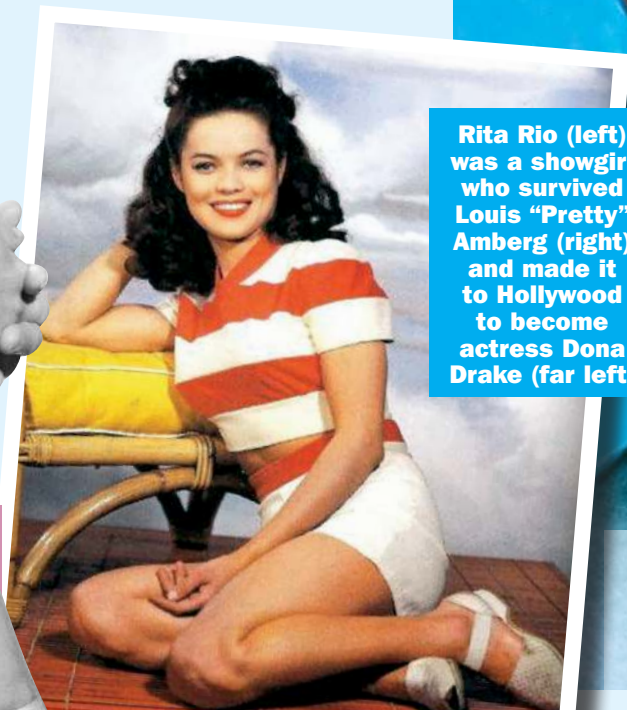
Even the brutal killers-for-hire of Murder Inc., such as Abe “Kid Twist” Reles (far left) and Bugs Goldstein (left) were wary of Amberg’s unpredictable sadism and indiscriminate acts of violence

loan-sharking. As Pretty got bigger, he moved the centre of his operation from Brownsville to the Borough Hall section of Brooklyn, because there was more money there. It was not until he left Brownsville that Murder Inc. felt free to move in and even then, whenever Pretty was in the Brownsville area, Pitkin and Saratoga and Amboy and Livonia were his streets and nobody else's.

The Syndicate that controlled the Brownsville pack knew Amberg was a screw-loose character who'd kill indiscriminately if he were pushed. Only



Rita Rio (left) was a showgirl who survived Louis "Pretty" Amberg (right) and made it to Hollywood to become actress Dona Drake (far left)



"Pretty Amberg" – the gangster that even deadly Murder Inc. killers thought was too dangerous and brutal...

AND MURDER INC.

Dutch Schultz tried to edge in on Brooklyn. When he first approached Amberg about his coming in, Pretty laughed his chilling cackle and shrugged off the Dutchman's suggestion with the advice that he put a pistol in his mouth and see how many times he could pull the trigger.

The Dutchman ignored Amberg's warning and sent a couple of his boys in to start up a money-lending operation. The henchmen were laced up dead in laundry bags within 24 hours.

Little Louie Amberg, one of a family of eight, came to New York from Russia in 1903 at the age of five. The Lower East Side was then teeming with humanity, a polyglot mixture of people that in itself could be dangerous. A lad had to be tough in those days and Louie soon proved that pound for pound he could bite off more trouble than anyone and chew it.

Papa Amberg sold vegetables and Louie became one of his prime salesmen, introducing a technique he later applied during Prohibition. Even in

his young days, Amberg's face was something short of a joy to behold. When he'd corner other kids, he'd shove some vegetables under their noses and say, "Buy!" They bought.

By the time Louie was 10, the Ambergs had moved to the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, much to the relief of the people on the East Side. It was here that Louie picked up the monicker "Pretty." Parents stopped threatening their children with the bogeyman and substituted Pretty Amberg.

Meanwhile, Amberg was in and out of the police

station so often that the police were tempted to install a revolving door. He tried all the gimmicks. He operated a protection racket on schoolchildren and also turned to shop-lifting. Complainants soon learned it was folly to go to the police about him. Pretty only retaliated.

Then one night a store was burglarised and a man who'd threatened to drive Pretty out of the neighbourhood had acid thrown in his face while he slept in his bed. The man was scarred, but fortunately his eyesight was saved. The

police were fairly sure Pretty was responsible, but were unable to prove it.

When Pretty was 14 he left school ostensibly to get a job. But honest work was anathema to him, and the “job” he had was his own loan service to other kids whom he soaked with heavy interest. Business thrived. The youngsters knew better than to fall behind on payments to Pretty Amberg.

In 1919 when Pretty was 21, he began to think of man-size operations.

“You fail to pay me back on time,” Pretty told all customers, “and I’ll take my money out in blood”

Prohibition was in force and Amberg saw a pot of gold in this, and so became one of Brooklyn’s first bootleggers.

“Hey, Joey,” he said to his brother who was four years his senior, “how do I learn to make booze?”

Joe couldn’t read. Pretty couldn’t.

“In the public library,” Joe told him. “There are plenty of books that will show you how.”

“Okay,” Pretty told him, “you’re coming to read them for me.”

The brothers spent an entire day in the library with Joe reading and Pretty listening attentively, his eyes closed.

When they left the building, Pretty clapped his hands. “That’s it,” he said. “Now we go into the booze business.”

He got hold of an empty warehouse and within a week they had cooked up their first batch.

Louie then entered what had been one of the best watering holes on Sutter Street before Prohibition. Now it was a restaurant – in front, that is. In the back, a speakeasy was operating full-blast.

Pretty cornered the owner and said: “What are you going to do when your booze supply runs out?” The owner replied that he’d made arrangements to get all the stuff he needed.

“You’re damn right you

have,” Pretty told him. “I’m supplying you.”

The speakeasy operator had never had a run-in with Pretty before. “Don’t kid yourself, sonny,” he said. “I’ve got a source. And believe me those guys would be real bad if I try to ditch them.”

“Worse than me?” Louie asked innocently, and walked out.

Three nights later the speakeasy owner got the message. Shortly after he locked up and left. Pretty and Joe came by. With Joe acting as lookout, Pretty broke into the restaurant. Minutes later he came out. The explosion that rocked the place even shook the elevated railway tracks.

After that, Pretty found it easier to line up clients. In fact, after two more explosions, he had all of Brownsville locked up tight.

Within five years Pretty and Joe Amberg were rolling in money. Pretty’s affluence spread to Manhattan. He had a suite of rooms in the Harding Hotel and more women than he could handle.

He began to rub shoulders with other rising criminals, such as Jack “Legs” Diamond, Arthur (Dutch Schultz) Flegenheimer, Vannie Higgins and Owney Madden.

With his control of Brownsville’s booze complete and profitable, Pretty looked around for other lucrative fields. He remembered his youthful experiments with loan-sharking and decided that, on a bigger scale, this was what he wanted.

Brownsville wasn’t the best place for it, so Amberg opened a ground-floor office in Borough Hall, the political and financial heart of Brooklyn. The sign in the window read simply: Louie Amberg. MONEY TO LOAN.

His rates were stiff, six for five. In other words, if a client needed \$50 for a week, the client had to pay back \$60 in seven days. Every additional week that went by would cost another \$10 in interest.

Pretty’s loan business operated in an unusual fashion. He interviewed all clients personally and wasn’t the least bit interested in

their general financial status. Everyone was a good risk so far as Pretty was concerned. “You fail to pay me back on time,” Pretty told all customers, “and I’ll take my money out in blood.”

Pretty handed the money out freely, but the borrower would not sign any papers. Joey Amberg simply made a notation of the amount in a little black book. In Brooklyn there was a term for the general treatment given to borrowers if they fell behind in their payments. It was “schlammin,” which meant a severe beating.

Pretty Amberg considered such half-measures as bad business. “We will skip the schlammin,” he told Joey, “and give everybody a free week. Then if they ain’t up to date by then we put them in the graveyard.”



Joe Amberg. Pretty’s older brother was a constant companion during his rise in the underworld

That was merely a figure of speech. Pretty buried nobody legally. His favourite graveyard was the Gowanus Canal.

A taxi driver named Schwartz was the first to get the treatment. His widow told the police that he was in debt to Pretty Amberg, and homicide officers checked Amberg after the cabbie’s body was discovered.

Pretty put on the innocent act. “Do I look like a guy who’d stiff somebody for a lousy \$80?” he asked.

But Pretty would happily knock off anybody for \$80. It was a principle with him.

The next week, police were back questioning Amberg about a corpse identified as Lukowsky. Four days later there was another in the canal, named

Donnelly. They were both in hock to Pretty.

“We know you did those jobs,” a detective told Pretty. “But we can’t prove it.”

“Tell you what,” Pretty answered. “You prove that I did and I won’t do it any more.”

The trouble was, the police couldn’t prove a thing.

But constantly having the law on his back annoyed Pretty. “We got to do a better job of ditching them,” he told his brother. “From now on we’ll put their feet in concrete.”

Joe Amberg, as sadistic as his brother, liked the idea. “Yeah, Louie,” he enthused, “that way we can drop them in the drink alive so they’ll really learn their lesson good!”

Thus, in addition to mash, concrete was constantly being mixed at the Amberg distillery, and wild-eyed victims, arms tied behind them, mouths gagged and feet encased in concrete, would be hauled out in the dead of night and bundled into a car. On the ride to the canal Pretty would lecture his victims on the evils of welching.

For further amusement, the Amberg boys would at times pretend to consider releasing their victims.

Once Pretty told a victim they were going to release him. He told Joey to get a hammer from the boot. Joey returned and said the sledge hammer wasn’t there. Pretty turned back to his victim with exaggerated disappointment. “Gee, fella, I’d like to set you free, but we’d have to drive back to the warehouse and I’d be late for a date. You wouldn’t want that, would you now?” Then the Amberg boys picked up the victim and tossed him into the canal.

The concrete boots approach kept the police away for quite a while, until one day a diver in the Gowanus Canal came across an Amberg victim. The police sent down other divers at the same spot and pulled out seven more victims. Of the eight dead men, five were in debt to a loan shark. In two instances, the victim’s families didn’t know or wouldn’t say who the shylock was. In three cases the men were known to have been in debt to

Pretty Amberg.

Naturally, the police came after Pretty. But Amberg was ready. "So what?" he asked. The answer was "so nothing," because the police didn't have a shred of evidence to tie Amberg in with any of the killings.

But there was one oddity about Pretty Amberg. He seldom carried a gun, or any weapon for that matter. He had an aversion to firearms, and a belief that a gun could only get him into trouble. Bullets could be traced.

Once, when Pretty was having trouble with three hoodlum brothers named Shapiro – Meyer, Irving and William – he happened to pass one on a Brownsville street. He backed the luckless Shapiro into a dark alley and bashed his skull in with the first handy brick he found.

So long as the Shapiros kept their activities outside the Brownsville area Pretty ignored them. However, the Shapiros began getting too big and set up their own loan operation in Borough Hall and had the gall to offer loans at only 10 per cent a week, undercutting Pretty's rates by half.

Pretty "got" one of the Shapiros. He never had the chance with the other two, but he needn't have worried – a couple of pro-killers named Reles and Malone did the job for him.

Pretty continued to operate as though he were immune to everything. Then he suddenly violated his own rule and began carrying a gun when he learned that Legs Diamond was considering muscling in on the Ambergs' territory.

Amberg had his gun only three days before the police swooped on him regarding a murder. They couldn't pin the murder on him, but they did get him on a concealed weapon charge. Pretty was sent to prison for 18 months. While there, he began to smell a frame-up. He heard that Diamond was behind it all, aiming to get him out of the way so he (Diamond) could move in on Brooklyn. The Ambergs only had a small clique of hoods compared to the outfit Legs Diamond could round up.

Pretty was sure he'd have to do a lot of killing when he got out, but it didn't turn out

that way. Diamond never got a chance to move in. He got involved in a shooting war with Cirro Terranova and his mob, and didn't have time to take over the Amberg territory.

Amberg got out of jail after a year and found everything prospering in Brooklyn. It was time for him to line up a new racket. He went into the laundry business, strictly legitimate, except that Pretty charged excessive rates. Even so, his persuasive personality enabled him to line up plenty of business.

The business prospered and also contributed further to Pretty's morbid methods of murder.

"From now on we don't use concrete no more to drown anybody. We stick them in laundry bags," he told his brother one day. Joe Amberg couldn't see what was so sensational about the idea until Pretty showed him how they could truss up a victim so that he would strangle himself to death trying to get out of his bonds.

Strangled corpses in laundry bags began turning up all over Brooklyn. Everybody knew Pretty Amberg was behind the killings. In fact, Damon Runyon used Pretty as the model for a character in his stories of a murderer who stuffed his victims in laundry bags. But once

more, the police had no proof that it was Amberg.

Police Commissioner Ed Mulrooney went as far as to tell the press that the police knew who was committing all the laundry-bag murders. "He's a well-dressed bum over in Brownsville who wouldn't be called handsome even by a blind person," Mulrooney stormed.

Amberg took the insult hard. "I'll teach that Mulrooney a lesson," he declared.

A week later, Pretty had a customer well behind on his payments. He gave him the laundry-bag treatment and then tossed the bag into a stolen car, drove into Manhattan and blithely parked it right in front of police headquarters.

The police top brass boiled, but their hands (like Amberg's victims') were tied. Meanwhile, Pretty was a regular at the night spots in Manhattan. He was often at Central Park Casino and was on nodding acquaintance there with Jimmy Walker, New York's playboy mayor.

Amberg also became known as the biggest tipper in town and his awesome countenance became a welcome sight to waiters.

By this time he had made his peace with Legs Diamond and they buddied around together. "We'll be pals, Jack," Pretty told him. "But if you ever set foot

in Brownsville, I'll kill you and your girlfriend and your missus and your whole damn family."

Legs Diamond had never had anyone talk to him like that. But the story is that he took one look at the wells of madness that were Pretty Amberg's eyes and lost all interest in Brooklyn.

With the end of Prohibition, Pretty lost his main source of income, but he still had plenty going for him.

It was during this era that the notoriously gruesome-looking Pretty made the acquaintance of a genuine beauty.

Rita Rio was born Eunice Westmoreland in Miami, Florida, in 1914. Both her parents were of African-American heritage but with long chestnut-coloured hair and green eyes she was able to pass as an "exotic"-looking Caucasian or Hispanic woman in an age when legal segregation meant these boundaries were significant.

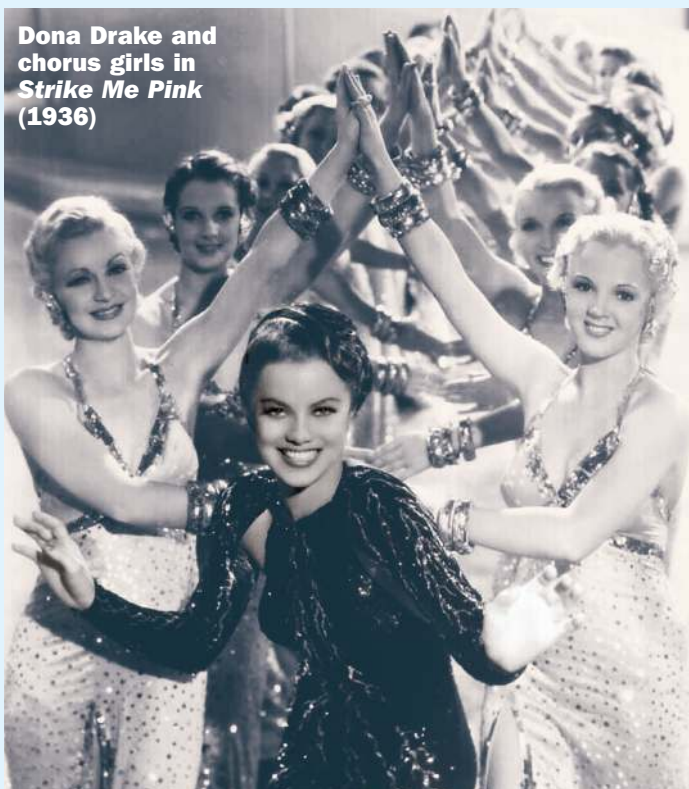
Nevertheless, her luminescent beauty, charisma and confidence – not to mention her sinuous dance moves – enabled her to progress from being just another showgirl to showing her skills as a versatile musician, orchestra leader and actress.

Her family moved to Philadelphia and young Eunice would entertain the patrons in the restaurant her father ran. While still a teenager she adopted the name Una Villon and danced as a chorus girl in nightclubs, including Nil's T. Granlund's Paradise Restaurant, one of the premier entertainment venues in Manhattan.

As Una Villon, she was cast in theatrical producer Earl Carroll's *Murder at the Vanities*. The petite beauty (she was only five feet tall) was a dynamic performer – singing and dancing and playing the clarinet, drums, saxophone and piano – and quickly drew the attention of the patrons at her Manhattan performances.

Beautiful showgirls were as much the accessories of gangland bosses as new machine-guns and automobiles, and soon Una began keeping company with Pretty Amberg – although whether she knew what he

Dona Drake and chorus girls in *Strike Me Pink* (1936)



was would prove to be a hot point of dispute in the near future...She still had plans to put into action – including a name change to Rita Rio.

For Amberg, while his romantic life was thriving, the future of his “business” was looking less certain.

The trouble was that other outfits, searching for new lines themselves, thought Amberg’s loan-shark operation looked inviting. Dutch Schultz sent in a couple of men named Dolak and Holinsky to operate in Borough Hall. Twenty-four hours later they were out of their office and into a couple of laundry bags.

Pretty Amberg was a psychopathic killer. But so was Dutch Schultz, and Pretty couldn’t scare the Dutchman off. Schultz sent an army of killers into

In the back seat of the car, roasted beyond all recognition, was the body of a man with wire wrapped around his neck, arms and legs

Brooklyn. They couldn’t corner Pretty, but they did get brother Joe.

Pretty Amberg wasn’t much of a family man, but Joe was the one person in the world he cared for. He lost all interest in his rackets. All he wanted was revenge on the Dutchman. A subsequent police investigation confirmed the fact that one day in October 1935, Pretty went over to Newark and made connections with some professional killers who were on good terms with the Dutchman, and offered to pay them \$50,000 as an advance to rub out Schultz. After the job was done, Pretty would pay them another \$50,000.

That is the end of all that is known of the Pretty Amberg story. A short time later, the Dutchman was killed together with three of his henchmen. Some police officers believed it was the Amberg killers who did it. Another theory is that it was the work of the Syndicate.

However, Pretty Amberg was not around to enjoy

the news. For a few days earlier, on October 23rd, 1935, the fire department responded to an emergency call and found a blazing car on a deserted Brooklyn street. In the back seat of the car, roasted beyond all recognition, was the body of a man with wire wrapped around his neck, arms and legs.

Police finally found a portion of a few fingerprints and were able to match them up with Louis Alex Amberg, who at the time was 37 years old.

Rita Rio, as she was now known, was questioned by the FBI about her notorious and now deceased paramour. Rita claimed he had been a polite and respectful gentleman. She knew him as Louis Cohen, she told police, and had no idea he had any connection to the criminal underworld. They had enjoyed horseback rides through Central Park. “All he bought me was candy,” she innocently claimed.

Whether this was the truth or not, when astonished police discovered that, for the 10 months prior to his death, Pretty Amberg had been staying in a hotel in midtown Manhattan under an assumed name, it seemed far more plausible.

Upon searching the hotel room the authorities discovered more than \$1,000 in cash (equivalent to more than \$18,000 today), jewellery (including a gold watch with initials that did not match Amberg’s given names) and a large quantity of documents. The information appeared to



Pretty Amberg came to an unpleasant end. His remains were discovered in the back of a burning car in Brooklyn

include names, addresses and other data written in a cryptic code...

Rita, free of suspicion, returned to Broadway and formed her first all-female orchestra – “Rita Rio and her Rhythm Girls.” It was quite a feat – the orchestra were all women, all white – led by African-American Rita (pretending to be Hispanic). The band was a gimmick, no doubt – aesthetically pleasing all-girl bands were popular at the time – but for the next four years they were highly successful, proving their abilities touring and selling out dance halls, nightclubs and hotel lounges.

Rita continued her showbiz career, appearing in a few films, until 1940 when, with the group facing financial problems, she went to Hollywood to try her luck.

She was “Rita Shaw” when she took her screen tests and by the time her first role as Dona Drake came, the studio press department was crediting her as a Hispanic performer – born in Mexico as Rita Novella.

In 1944, following a whirlwind 10-day romance, she married Academy Award-winning fashion designer William Travilla, who designed many of Marilyn Monroe’s favourite outfits on and off the screen, including the white cocktail dress she wears to such famous effect in *The Seven Year Itch*.

The couple had a daughter and Dona continued in minor roles in films, appearing as an Arab girl opposite Bob Hope and Bing Crosby in *Road to Morocco* in 1942. For the rest of the 1940s she played a succession of “ethnic” roles in films starring Dorothy Lamour, Bette Davis and Rita Hayworth.

She retired from film in the 1950s, and would occasionally appear in her husband’s fashion shows in the 1960s. Her health began to fail in the 1970s, when she was stricken by cardiac problems. Under yet another name, Dona D. Travilla, she died of pneumonia and respiratory failure in Los Angeles, California, on June 20th, 1989, at the age of 74. She was cremated and her ashes scattered at sea.

Pretty Amberg’s “cremation” had been a far less solemn affair and officially his murder remains unsolved. As one newspaperman at the time put it: “If there was ever a case where the police didn’t work overtime to solve a crime, this is it.”

Needless to say, a great many people slept easier with Louis Amberg out of the way. Pretty, the killer of 100 men, went the same way he lived, and when he did there was great relief in Brownsville.



Dona Drake had a reasonable career in Hollywood in an era when her prospects were still limited

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THEY WERE both big men – big in stature, big in ideas, big in money and, perhaps most important of all to both of them, they were big in friendship.

They were Australians, and their horizons, like everything around them, were big. They both had dazzling wives, they were both rich, owning flashy cars, expensive city homes in Sydney and weekend ranches, and they were both at the top of their careers.

Millionaire Bernie Whelan, chief executive of Crown Equipment, a multinational forklift company, and married to Kerry, was richer than his old buddy Bruce Burrell, married to Dallas, and the boss of Bay Advertising. But the difference in their wealth was relative,

and it certainly made no dent in their bond of friendship. Bruce and Dallas habitually visited Bernie and Kerry at the Whelan country property up in the Blue Mountains. They played tennis there, swam, enjoyed barbecues, and went on shooting trips.

These were the trappings of success. This was the good life.

These were the gilded days of azure blue, the golden nights. Nothing it seemed could end them.

Bruce Burrell was making it big as an advertising contractor to his

buddy's business, but when in 1987 Bernie offered him a full-time top management job with Crown, he decided to take it and wind down his own company. After all, he'd made a heap of money, and Bernie was offering a whole heap more.

Then three years later came disaster. Burrell was made redundant, along with 30 other Crown employees. Times had suddenly become tough in the forklift truck

and building equipment business. Bernie Whelan had to slim down, and Bernie knew that people were his biggest single cost. Even his buddy would have to be sacrificed.

If Bernie Whelan wasn't doing quite so well, Bruce Burrell, suddenly out of work, was facing meltdown. He was predominantly an advertising man, and with the downturn in the business world advertising men were

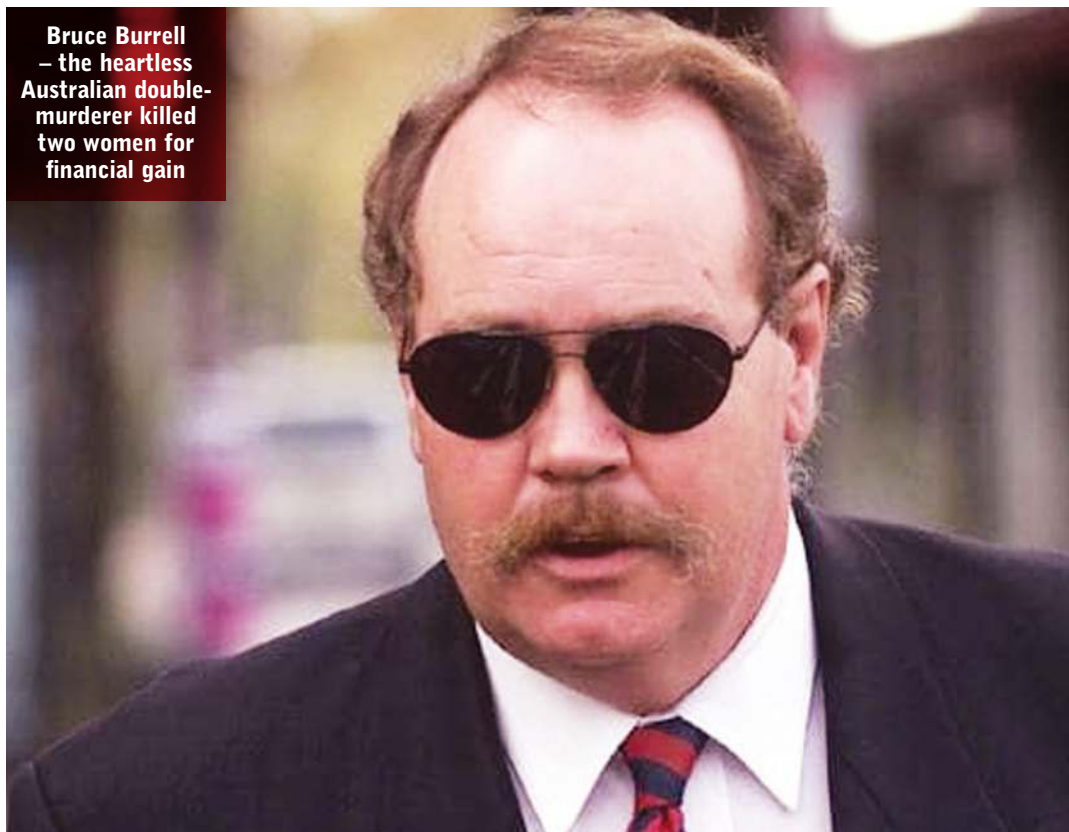
now a dime a dozen. At 37 he was pushing 40 in a young man's world. He began selling off some of his assets, and borrowing cash he could never repay from his in-laws.

Burrell knew he was on the slippery slope when the great friendship began to fall apart. There was a falling-out over a couple of matters. First Bernie lent Burrell a rifle, which was never returned because

Reader Stuart Davies from Barnstaple wrote: "In 2006 kidnapper and double-murderer Bruce Burrell was given life imprisonment plus 44 years for the murder in 1995 of Dorothy Davis, and for the 1997 murder of Kerry Whelan. Has *True Crime* ever covered this Australian case?"

We have, Mr. D. but not for several years, so it's time to refresh our memories and get right up to date with this intriguing case. For all our readers here's our report by Victor Camp

**Bruce Burrell
– the heartless
Australian double-
murderer killed
two women for
financial gain**



SYDNEY'S KILLER

Will His Victims Ever Be Found?

Burrell subsequently claimed it had been stolen from his car boot. Then Burrell offered to help out Bernie in the great Australian drought by taking 12 head of his cattle to graze on his country property.

Somehow the cattle got lost. Burrell said they must have wandered into the nearby national forest, adjoining his acreage. They were nowhere to be seen.

Four years after he was made redundant Bruce Burrell still had no steady job, and he was strapped for cash. He had been living off his wife's money, and resorting

friend. "She's even threatening me with legal action."

Burrell was indeed desperate – and desperate men often resort to unreal

about the money," Burrell confided to a

When police later reconstructed Dorothy's last movements, they believed that the sick friend she was going to visit was in fact Burrell's wife Dallas, who was indeed ill with cancer. They also believed that Burrell lured the widow to his house on the pretext that his wife wanted to see her.

hours to Hillydale. Police believe these trips provided an opportunity for him to dispose of Dorothy's body.

But for the time being no one suspected Bruce Burrell of being involved in the old lady's disappearance, not even when, a month later, he phoned her daughter Maree Dawes. "Your mother



Above, police search the forest near Burrell's Hillydale property for the bodies of victims Dorothy Davis and Kerry Whelan (inset left, top to bottom)

WITHOUT REMORSE:

to dodgy con tricks, like posing as a potential buyer to take cars for test runs and failing to bring them back. Now he remembered a wealthy widow who was a friend of his wife's family and who lived just down the road from his house. She was Mrs. Dorothy Davis – or Dotti Dot as some called her. She had a heart of gold and a bank balance to match it, and she was known to be a soft touch for a loan.

Burrell decided to try his luck. The story he told Dorothy Davis was that he needed a \$100,000 bridging loan to buy a house – it was only a loan of course. The kind old lady smiled and wrote him a cheque. The following year, 1995, she wanted the loan repaid, and Burrell was all but broke.

"She's coming on strong

solutions to their problems. He decided that the only way he could stop Dorothy Davis pressurising him for the return of her money was to kill her.

The last anyone saw of Dorothy was a builder who was working on her house. At 1.30 p.m. on May 30th, 1995, she told him that she was going off to visit a friend who had cancer. She was never seen again.

And they contended that he murdered Dorothy either at his home in Sydney or later that day at his Hillydale country place.

On the day Dorothy was last seen, Burrell made a "sudden and unexpected trip" from Sydney to his remote property. He stayed only a few hours before returning to the city. The following day he again drove for two and a half

gave me a cheque for half a million dollars a few weeks ago," he said. "She asked me if I would put it in my bank account for her."

Maree not surprisingly couldn't believe her ears. She was later to say that the phone call "blew her out of the water."

"Why on earth did my mother do that?" she asked icily.

"Well, it was sort of secret business," Burrell said. "We met in a car park and she asked me to do this for her." The suggestion clearly was that Dorothy was enlisting Burrell's aid to launder money for her, but her daughter was well aware that Dorothy was very rich and had no reason to resort to criminal activities. So go on, what happened next, she asked Burrell.

Police believe Burrell lured Dorothy to his house on the pretext that his wife wanted to see her. He murdered her either at his home in Sydney or later that day at his Hillydale countryside place

"The cheque bounced," Burrell said. "Then your mother gave me another cheque for \$100,000. I banked it for her in my account. She asked me to draw out \$90,000 for her, and told me to keep \$10,000 for my trouble."

This almost nonsensical story would have been easy to check out with Dorothy Davis if she had been around. But she wasn't. Her family were aware that she was friendly with the family of Bruce Burrell's wife, Dallas. But they also knew she was an extremely independent woman who sometimes transacted odd deals.

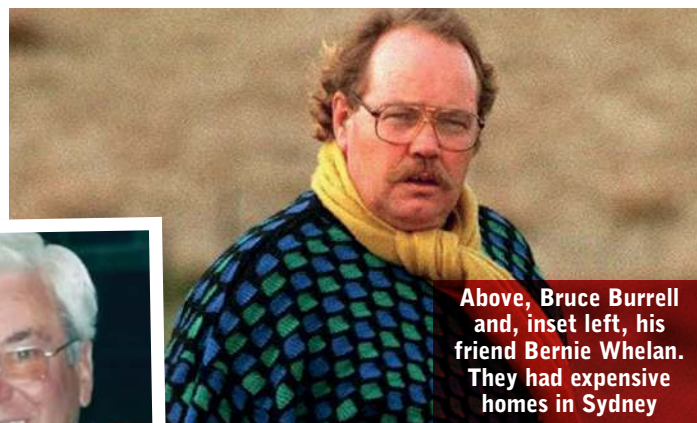
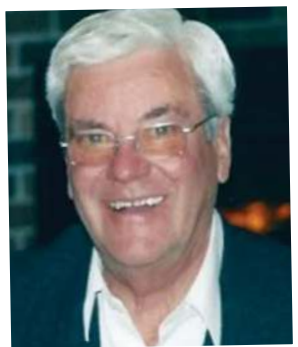
Dorothy's \$100,000 provided Burrell with a lifeline, but it didn't stop him from slowly drowning in his debts. His next big problem was his wife Dallas, who decided to divorce him. She stayed in their Sydney home while he moved permanently out to his country spread at Hillydale, near Goulburn, in the New South Wales southern uplands. This meant that he had to raise a mortgage to pay off Dallas and her family, who were joint owners of the property. That would cost him \$1,000 a month.

When the mortgage payments fell behind, he borrowed \$30,000 from his father, and when that money was used up he sponged off acquaintances, people he had worked with, and neighbours.

He approached Peter Buckley, the director of a company where he had once done advertising work. He asked Buckley to write a letter in support of a loan, saying he was an employee who earned \$60,000 to \$80,000. When Buckley refused, Burrell became angry.

Buckley was later to recall: "He said 'I want you to get me the money. If you don't get me the money...you'd just better damn well do it or else.' And then he threatened me over the phone."

With Dorothy Davis's money all spent, and all his ruses falling apart, Burrell



Above, Bruce Burrell and, inset left, his friend Bernie Whelan. They had expensive homes in Sydney

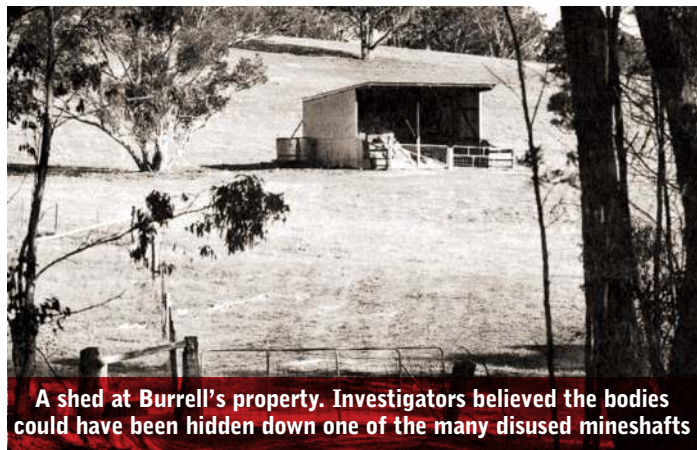
resorted to an even more desperate measure. He decided

to kidnap Kerry Whelan, wife of his old friend and boss Bernie, and hold her to ransom.

His preparations were conducted with extraordinary subterfuge. On Monday, April 7th, 1997, he phoned Bernie and began a "how are things" conversation. Because they hadn't spoken for several years, and because there was now hostility smouldering between them, Bernie couldn't fathom out what the call was for. Did his former

also told him about regular fortnightly plane trips he and Kerry made to Adelaide for a couple of days at a time, always on the same day in mid-week. He had laid bare most of his itinerary for the next few months to a man who would use the information to kidnap his wife.

On the morning of April 16th Burrell drove his stolen Jaguar bearing false number plates to Bernie's country property, where he met Kerry. He arrived unannounced, but Kerry gave him a cup of coffee. She introduced him to Amanda Minton-Taylor, daughter of her close friend, who doubled up as her



A shed at Burrell's property. Investigators believed the bodies could have been hidden down one of the many disused mineshafts

friend want some work? Did he want a reference? Mystified, he allowed the conversation to ramble on, hoping that sooner or later Burrell would get to the point of it.

Burrell didn't get to the point, and when Bernie put down the phone he shook his head in bewilderment. What he didn't realise was that he had yielded to Burrell vital knowledge essential for a kidnap. He had told Burrell that on April 16th he would be at his office in Sydney while Kerry would be at his country property. He had

children's nanny and her horse trainer. Kerry's son James was home from school because he was unwell.

Kerry and Burrell sat on a sofa chatting for some 20 minutes, and then Kerry escorted Burrell back to his car. Looking through a window, Amanda saw Kerry give the visitor a kiss on the cheek, and when Kerry came back to the house she said something that Amanda thought very odd.

She told Amanda: "Can you do me a favour? You never saw him here. Don't tell anyone. Give me a

couple of weeks and I'll tell you why." She reassured the nanny: "Don't worry, I'm not having an affair."

Amanda nodded in agreement, but not surprisingly she remained deeply puzzled. Because Kerry said nothing else, what she and Burrell talked about and why she decided to keep his visit secret from her husband, remains a mystery. A police theory was that he turned up that day to kidnap Kerry, but didn't do so because Amanda was there and James was home from school.

But during the conversation she almost certainly arranged a secret meeting with Burrell several weeks later at the Park Royal Hotel in Parramatta, Sydney.

More intriguing still was that Amanda heard Kerry muttering to herself a little later. She heard her say, "That bastard would have to turn up!"

One suggestion is that Burrell probably threatened Kerry with allegations of infidelity. The problem with that was that Kerry wasn't suspected of anything – there wasn't the slightest whiff of scandal about her. A more likely, but equally unsatisfactory explanation, was that Burrell asked her for money and was able to give her a reason for it that intrigued her.

The secret meeting they arranged was on the morning of Tuesday, May 6th. Later that day Kerry was due to meet her husband for lunch before they flew to Adelaide. At 9.30 a.m. she was videoed by security cameras, going into the hotel car park. She was seen on camera walking up the ramp of the car park and on to the street. Forty-four seconds later a camera recorded the reflected image of a white Mitsubishi Pajero pulling away from the kerb. The irresistible inference was that someone picked her up. That was the last anyone ever saw of Kerry Whelan.

The first that Bernie Whelan knew that something was wrong was when his wife failed to turn up to lunch. The plane was at 5.30 p.m., and when Kerry hadn't shown up by 4.30 a very worried Bernie set off for a car park in Parramatta where he knew

she always left her car. If it wasn't there, he reasoned, she must be running late. If it was there, something must be wrong.

It was there. He rang the police. Aware that Bernie was very rich and that his wife could be a kidnap target, they checked on her movements during the day. They discovered that she was scheduled to call on a friend, Mrs. Minton-Taylor, mother of Amanda, at 8.30 a.m. and she had an appointment with a beautician in Sydney at 9.30 a.m. She had failed to turn up for either appointment.

Puzzled, and deeply anxious, Bernie Whelan cancelled his flight and returned home with a heavy heart. The next day he received a typewritten ransom note through the post. It demanded US\$1 million, and stated that Kerry would die if the money wasn't forthcoming.

The ransom note stipulated that the payment must be made within seven days and in Australian dollars. It told Bernie not to contact the police, instructing him to:

"Insert an advert in the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* in the public notices section when the money is ready. It must say, Anyone who witnessed a white Volkswagen Beetle parked beside the eastern gates by the Sydney Olympic site at 10.30 p.m. on Tuesday 8-4-97, please call Then put your home telephone number at the end of the advertisement."

Bernie called the police at once, and inserted the advertisement just as he was instructed, for three days. But there was no response. Detectives suspected that the kidnapper must have known that the police had been called in. They set up a task force named Bellaire and soon discovered that Bernie had insured all his top employees against being kidnapped.

What was more, the insurance on Kerry Whelan was a million US dollars – the exact sum demanded by the kidnapper. That



Above, the phonebox outside the Empire Hotel at Goulburn, to where the kidnapper's call was traced. Below, top to bottom, the ransom note which Bernie Whelan received the day after Kerry's kidnapping, and Burrell's to-do list

suggested that the abductor knew about Bernie's insurance policy for his family and executives at Crown – someone, therefore, that knew the millionaire very well. That was when attention began to be focused on Bruce Burrell.

Carefully investigating the failed advertising man without arousing his suspicion, detectives

established that a couple of days after Kerry's disappearance Burrell borrowed a neighbour's car and drove to the town of Goulburn. He phoned Crown Equipment from a callbox and without disclosing his identity spoke to a receptionist and said, "Mrs. Whelan is OK. Mr. Whelan must call off the police and media today. Tell

home nursing a bad back," he said. Did he make a call from the phone box at Goulburn? Yes, he had made calls from there, but not to Crown Equipment.

Two days later they searched his Hillydale property. To the media who got wind of what was happening and had set up camp outside, the police said that Burrell was "a person of interest but not a suspect." Reporters thought otherwise – they were convinced that detectives were there to search for Kerry's body.

They didn't find the body, or even any forensic evidence that might suggest a murder, but they found a typewriter on which the ransom note was typed. They took away 22 bags of documents and a road map with the Parramatta Park Royal Hotel highlighted.

They found some notes in Burrell's handwriting that were particularly intriguing. The first note, an outline of the kidnap plan, read: 1. Collection. 2. Advise [sic]. 3. Waiting. 4. How to proceed. 5. Pick up. 6. Cover all.

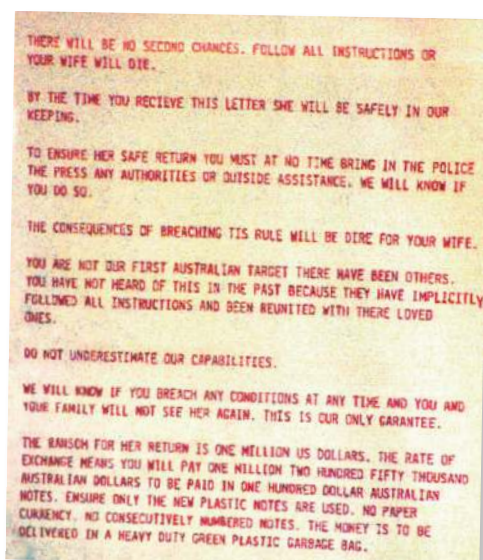
The second note, a draft of the ransom demand, read: 1. Has been K. 2. No P. 3. Letter within 2 days. 4. Nothing until received. 5. Stress '2'.

The police were later to maintain that K stood for kidnapping and P meant police.

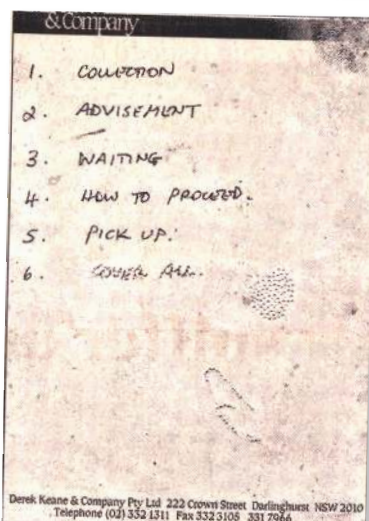
They also found a .44-calibre rifle which was the same one Burrell said was stolen from his car boot, a near-empty bottle of chloroform, a stolen Mitsubishi Pajero car similar to the one caught on CCTV outside the Park Royal Hotel, a stolen Jaguar, and a crossbow.

If Burrell was the kidnapper and the killer, where was the body? His rambling country property was covered with deep ravines and disused mineshafts, some now inaccessible and most of them extremely dangerous. Nonetheless the police searched where they could and found nothing.

Then there was Dorothy Davis, who vanished in 1995. Surmising that he had probably kidnapped and murdered her too, they wondered where he could have dumped her body.



The ransom note stipulated that the payment must be made within seven days and in Australian dollars. It told Bernie not to contact the police



him, the man with the white Volkswagen."

When the call was reported to the police, they knew it was the kidnapper, because only they and the Whelan family knew about the white Volkswagen reference. Phone traces showed the call came from a box outside the Empire Hotel at Goulburn, the nearest town to where Burrell had his country spread.

On May 21st, 1997, two weeks after Kerry was kidnapped, the police moved in on Burrell. He protested his innocence at once. "On the day she vanished I was at

There were no answers to any of these questions. What the investigators now decided they needed was time. Burrell was clearly a thief, specialising in stealing cars. It was decided to charge him with stealing three cars, and with fraudulently possessing the .44 rifle and a dangerous weapon, the crossbow.

But one man was still convinced that Bruce Burrell couldn't have murdered

Kerry – and that was her husband, Bernie Whelan. He and Burrell had been mates for too long, he reasoned. Burrell would never stoop to such a vile act. “It was someone in the underworld,” he told friends.

As it happened, Bernie knew a few underworld characters. So he invited one of them, known as Karl the Barber, to dine with him. But Karl couldn't help. He had been involved in some

minor criminal activity many years ago, he explained, but, “I know criminals. I don't associate with them.”

Burrell was committed for trial on the theft and dangerous weapon charges in July, 1997. The next month there came another bizarre twist when Bernie Whelan's family were contacted by a man demanding \$30,000, “or else Kerry's body will be sent to

you in a body bag.”

Devastating though the call was for the family, it gave them hope that Kerry was still alive. In fact, it was all a cruel hoax, a call made by a petty criminal who had lost money while gambling and had become desperate. He was so inept, he used his own phone from home to make the first call to the Whelan family.

The police had no doubts now that Kerry was dead, and no doubts about who killed her. They reckoned she was abducted in the Mitsubishi Pajero and they were able to describe the vehicle in minute detail. They at least had the killer safely under lock and key when he was convicted of the charges he faced in 1997 and jailed for two and a half years.

But they had still been unable to pin murder charges successfully by the time he was released in April, 2001. He went on to a TV chat show to deny he was in any way connected

“It's just freakish that I happened to know two wealthy women who have vanished”

with the disappearances of the two women. “It's just freakish that I happened to know two wealthy women who have vanished,” he said.

Meanwhile, Bernie Whelan had re-married. His new wife's name was Debra and she was his third spouse – he had been married before he met Kerry. Time marched on.

But if Bruce Burrell thought he was off the hook he was mistaken. In 2002 he was called to an inquest into Kerry's disappearance. After he refused to answer any of the questions put to him, the coroner found that a “known person” was responsible for Kerry's kidnapping and death, and gave notice that he would send his findings to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Burrell was brought to trial at New South Wales

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MIDDLESBROUGH HORROR




KILLING HIS WIFE WAS PART OF HIS RETIREMENT PLAN

IRISH SHOCKER



FIRST BLOOD AT MOUNTJOY

How The Hangings Began

SERIAL KILLER'S CONFESSION

“MURDERING YOUNG WOMEN WAS MY LIFE'S PASSION”



HANGED IN LIVERPOOL



“THE MOST HATED MAN IN BRITAIN”

LYNCH MOB TERROR IN BLACKBURN

Warwickshire's Ghastly Witchcraft Murder



HAD FABIAN FOUND THE KILLER?

Blue Mountains Murder

THE BOY NEW SOUTH WALES WAS DETERMINED TO HANG





HORROR IN THE PLAYGROUND



ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSAGENT FROM APRIL 4TH OR SEE THE OFFER ON PAGE 9

Supreme Court in August, 2005, for Kerry's kidnapping and murder. After the jury failed to agree, the New South Wales government brought in legislation that allowed majority verdicts in the state, and a new trial began in March, 2006.

Prosecutor Mark Tedeschi told the jury that Burrell had no credibility and "an amazing body of evidence against him." He went on: "He was never going to allow Kerry to return to her family."

The car, caught on camera, that drove her away was a two-door, two-tone Mitsubishi Pajero with a bull bar, running boards, no roof rack, a dirty rear window and a spare tyre with no cover – exactly the same as the Pajero found at Burrell's property.

"In all probability Kerry Whelan was killed on May 6th, 1997, within half an hour of her getting into the car and within the confines of Sydney," Mr. Tedeschi said. Burrell, he went on, was in "financial desperation" after being unemployed for seven years, recently divorced and facing a new mortgage.

During the course of the two trials Burrell was not the only one under suspicion. Bernie's private life was examined in detail. The jury heard about his troubled first marriage followed by divorce in the early 80s, and his first wife's death in 1992.

They heard too how he met his third wife, Debra, just six months after Kerry's disappearance.

Burrell's defence lawyer, David Dalton, also suggested that Bernie Whelan was having an affair with the family's nanny while he was married to Kerry. Bernie dismissed this as "scurrilous nonsense."

Another defence suggestion was that Trevor Whelan, Bernie's estranged, adopted son from his first marriage, could have been a suspect. Trevor was described in court as "violent and disturbed and capable of anything." It was noted he had been cut out of Bernie's will.

Called to give evidence, Trevor admitted to becoming violent when he learned that his father had left his mother Helen, Bernie's first wife, and



Burrell before his conviction. What did he do with the bodies?

taken up with a younger woman named Kerry. He thought Kerry was a "money-grabber" and resented the way his mother had been treated.

"But I had nothing to do with the disappearance of Kerry," he told the court.

When he discovered his parents had separated in the mid-1980s he had gone to the family home in northern Sydney and found Kerry there. It was then he had a violent confrontation with his father.

"The relationship with my father dwindled over the years," he went on. But now the animosity and hostility had lessened and they had reconciled many of their differences. "We have sort of learned to accept each other. I accepted that dad and Kerry were married, so I had to make an effort to be part of the family."

Another suspect pointed out by the defence was Karl the Barber, who was said to have had a reputation as a gangster in Sydney in the 1970s and 80s.

All these options were rejected by the jury, who found Burrell guilty of kidnapping and murder. As the verdict was announced he showed no emotion. He shook hands with his lawyers and waved at relatives who

had supported him during the trial.

Passing sentence, Judge Graham Barr told Burrell he was a cold and remorseless killer. His plot to extort money had been "persistent and calculated." His motive was the cold desire to enrich himself, and "there is no remorse."

When he was marched down to the cells to begin a life sentence he took with him the secret of Kerry Whelan's whereabouts.

That is an issue that still burns for her husband and his family. "Our greatest problem is that our children and I want to lay her to rest, but there is only one person who knows where she is," Bernie Whelan said. "We talk about Kerry every day. We'll never get over it. A person that kills just for money is a very vicious type of person and that's what we had to deal with."

"This is probably the most vicious crime you can think of because it plays with your mind. It's a form of mental torture."

He never suspected during their previous friendship that Burrell could be so cruel or motivated by greed to kill. "But Bruce always had some idea of self-grandeur and he misread it. Unfortunately it cost Kerry her life."

Burrell's troubles were far from over with the verdict. In 2007 he was brought back to court to be tried for the murder of Dorothy Davis. The jury heard of the \$100,000 loan she had made to him and how she was contemplating legal action to get her money back. And how she then suddenly vanished.

His defence lawyers said prosecutors had not eliminated the possibility that a former chloroform addict was responsible for

the killing, or that Burrell was at a colleague's 40th birthday lunch.

The jury, however, did eliminate those possibilities, and found him guilty. The decision appeared to stun him.

Bruce Burrell had nothing to say for himself. He did not go into the witness-box in any of the three murder trials he faced, but he remained an exceedingly rare specimen in the history of Australian crime, for he was convicted of two murders neither of which had a body.

Bruce Burrell lost appeals against both his murder convictions. In May, 2010, the High Court dismissed his application to appeal. His barrister claimed that the trial judge had unfairly directed the jury.

With the prospect of regaining his freedom gone, would Burrell, faced with the prospect of a lifetime spent behind bars, reveal where he dumped the remains of Kerry Whelan and Dorothy Davis? Sadly not. Despite several attempts by police to get the killer to talk, he refused to co-operate. Bernie Whelan died in November 2015, and in August 2016, any hope that his wife's remorseless killer would ever reveal all was lost when Burrell died in hospital, aged 63, from lung and liver cancer.

Australia is a vast country. Without specific information, the chances of the victims ever coming home seem remote indeed.

Following Burrell's death, a retired lead investigator into the murders admitted that the chances of the families being able to give their loved ones a decent burial had diminished.

"I should never say never, anything could happen in the future, they are located somewhere, they are buried somewhere, possibly on his old property in Southern Highlands," he said.

"Unfortunately, it is a likely place where someone could bury someone and they would never be found."

"This is probably the most vicious crime you can think of because it plays with your mind. It's a form of mental torture"

Got a crime question? Don't hesitate to ASK TC at the address given on page 28

THE LITTLE Pole was pitifully thin, hollow-cheeked, toothless and bald. As he dragged his heavy suitcase along the pavement of Avenue Foch in Paris he seemed certain to drop dead from exhaustion with every step he took.

He was Joachim Gusbinov and within the next 24 hours he was destined to have an unenviable place in the annals of French crime.

It was mid-afternoon in January 1942, and this was occupied Paris at the height of the war. If the groups of German soldiers mingling among the women shoppers and the occasional businessman noticed him, they did not give him a second thought as he turned into the rue Lesueur.

Like a good number of Parisian streets since the occupation army moved in, the rue Lesueur had somewhat changed. The houses, large buildings standing back from the pavement, were at one time the homes of the very wealthy. Now, for the most part, they had been commandeered by the various departments of the collaborative Pétain regime.

At last the struggling Gusbinov came to the house he wanted – No. 21. To all appearances the place seemed empty. Yet there was an air about it not so much of decay as of living, active evil.

Gusbinov unlatched the gate, hurried across a courtyard to a side entrance and banged on the door. It opened slowly to reveal Dr. Marcel Petiot.

Dr. Petiot was as suave and handsome as his visitor was tatty and miserable, but the welcome was warm. Petiot bolted the door behind him and, placing a hand on Gusbinov's shoulder, guided him along a passage to a small consulting room.

"Sit down and let me take your suitcase. We have a great deal to discuss." He motioned the visitor to a chair while he sat behind a desk.

The doctor was a dark, lightly built man in his mid-40s. His thick black hair was grey-flecked; his face finely chiselled and intelligent.

"It is all arranged," Petiot said,

leaning across the desk. "You leave tomorrow night. You have brought some money with you?"

Gusbinov indicated the suitcase. "A million francs, plus two hundred thousand American dollars. I also have some jewellery, valued at five hundred thousand francs."

"Good. You understand that the money is not for me. The men who will help you leave the country run great risks. They are patriots, members of the Resistance movement, and they constantly need funds."

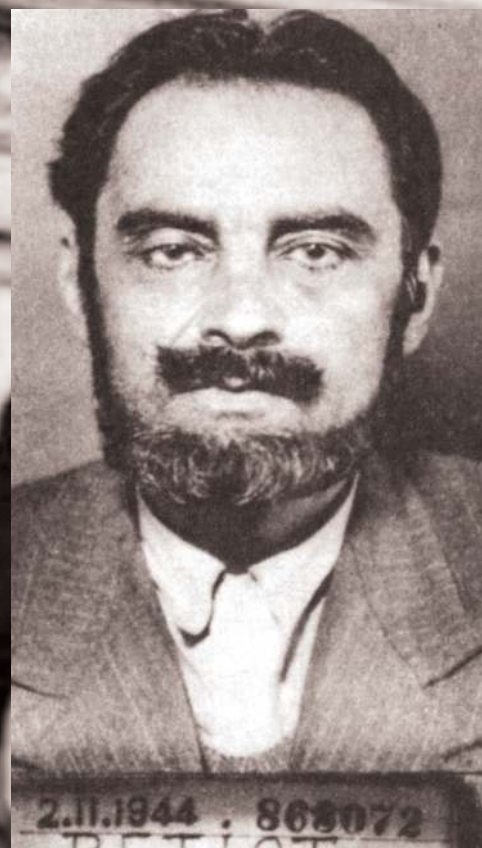
"You may consider that the money you pay them is not only for your passage, but a patriotic donation to the forces of freedom."

"From which port am I sailing, doctor?"

"I can't tell you that yet," Petiot said. "The fewer people in the know, the better. If the Gestapo caught on to us there would be torture and murder. You must report here at 9 o'clock tomorrow night and then you will be told."

Dr. Petiot got up and opened a medicine cabinet. "You are going to Mexico, Gusbinov," he said. "The climate there should be excellent for your tuberculosis. But you will first disembark on the Gulf Coast. There is a danger there from malaria and yellow fever which could prove fatal in your condition, so I need to

Right, Dr. Marcel Petiot in court. He used the war to add to his personal wealth. Below, his mug-shot taken shortly after his arrest



THE DOCTOR HAD A DEAD

Dr. Marcel Petiot freely admitted that he had killed over and over again. To the police he was a callous mass murderer who slaughtered purely for gain. But he maintained he was actually a wartime patriot who executed only Nazis, collaborators and traitors...

inoculate you. It won't take a moment."

Gusbinov slipped off his jacket, rolled up his shirt sleeve and waited patiently. The doctor took his arm and gently inserted a syringe.

"Right, it's all over." He smiled. "There will be no fee for that."

The doctor helped him

on with his jacket. Gusbinov fumbled for a sleeve – he was beginning to feel dizzy. "Remember, don't mention your departure to anyone, not even your closest friends," the doctor was saying.

"And leave your suitcase here for the night. My contacts will need some money in advance."

Petiot took Gusbinov by the arm and guided him into the passage, turning him away from the door by which he had entered. Gusbinov's dizziness had increased and his head was throbbing. He wasn't feeling very well at all.

"I'm showing you out by another way, Gusbinov," the doctor said. "One can never



Above, the furnace in the basement of the house in the rue Lesueur where Dr. Petiot tried to destroy the remains of some of his victims

CTOR H CHAMBER

be too careful. A Gestapo agent watched my door for several hours last week.”

They went through three internal doors, then Dr. Petiot stopped before a low door on the right-hand side of a passage. He drew back a heavy bolt and pushed the door open, revealing a bare, triangular hall. There was another door in its far wall.

The doctor smiled. “This is where I must leave you. You’ll be fine! That door over there leads to the street.”

They shook hands. Gusbinov said, “I shall never be able to thank you enough, doctor. I shall be indebted to you for the rest of my life.”

“Think nothing of it. I’ll see you tomorrow evening at nine.”

Dr. Petiot quietly closed the door behind him and fastened the bolt. Gusbinov, his head aching, staggered across to the far door that led to the street and grasped the handle. It was locked.

The hairs on his neck began to prickle. Desperately, he kicked at the door. It didn’t budge. He threw himself at it. It would not give way.

Getting a grip on himself,

it occurred to him he might be doing something wrong. Carefully he looked for the hinges of the door. There were none.

There was a ringing in his ears now and his eyes were

misting over. The realisation of what was happening dawned upon him as a creeping, sickening dread – then struck home in an avalanche of panic.

He flung himself at the

chamber’s real door, clawed at it. “Dr. Petiot! Dr. Petiot! Help me! Help me!”

He raised his head, shouting and screaming. It was then that he saw on a level with his shoulder a small round window set in the wall. He rushed towards it on legs that were already giving way. In a brief instant as he slipped down the wall he saw through the glass the distorted face of Marcel Petiot staring in at him. Then he crumpled to the floor, convulsed and lay still. Joachim Gusbinov was dead.

Just over two years later the Germans were still stalking the boulevards and still interrogating victims in the rue de la Pompe. But in that spring of 1944 there was a feeling of excitement among Parisians – a feeling that liberation was close at hand.

On Saturday, March 11th, 1944, Jacques Marcais threw his curtains at No. 20 rue Lesueur open to the sunshine and sniffed the air. But instead of the smells of spring a foul, sickly stench drifted up into his room.

M. Marcais was furious. This was happening a lot lately. The stench came from his neighbour’s chimney which had been belching forth acrid smoke for days. Angrily, M. Marcais phoned the police.

“The stink is coming from number twenty-one next door,” he told the desk sergeant. “I’m sure the place is uninhabited. So if the chimney’s smoking like that the place could be on fire.”

Ten minutes later two constables were at the door. Together with M. Marcais they went to No. 21 and rang the bell. There was no answer, and the run-down state of the place convinced them that there would not be one.

They were just about to get permission to break down the door when one of them saw a card lying on the doorstep. It must have been nailed to the door at one time and fallen off. It invited callers looking for the owner to call at 66 rue Caumartin.

The two constables hurried back to M. Marcais’s house, phoned the police station, and found the number of the owner of No. 66 rue Caumartin. It was a Dr. Marcel Petiot.

“What?” exclaimed the doctor as the complaint was relayed to him. “My chimney

is smoking? I'll come right away."

Smoke from Dr. Petiot's chimney was now billowing out in great brown clouds that were completely engulfing the rue Lesueur. The police decided to call the fire brigade.

When the fire engine arrived a crowd quickly gathered. The fire was rapidly getting worse – there was no time now to wait for the arrival of Dr. Petiot. Unceremoniously the fire captain ordered his men to smash down the door.

Three firemen rushed through the splintered gap, dragging a hosepipe behind them. Outside, their colleagues, the police and the crowd waited for the dousing of the flames. What they didn't expect was the firemen to emerge almost at once, gasping for breath, their faces white with terror.

"Get the police in there!" yelled one of the firemen. "The place is full of corpses!"

The police sergeant didn't stop to ask questions. Beckoning to his two constables he rushed inside. They found themselves in what had once been a wine cellar but which now resembled a medieval torture chamber. There were bodies and parts of bodies strewn all over the floor, piled along the walls and in the corners.

At one end of the cellar a large furnace was belching forth the clouds of foul-smelling smoke that were causing so much consternation in the street. Beside the furnace propped up against the wall was half a human body, split from skull to groin.

All over the floor too were bits of clothing and personal belongings that must have once belonged to the 27 people whose executions, the police were soon to discover, had taken place in the house.

A button from an overcoat, the clasp from a woman's handbag, a bent, shattered pair of steel-rimmed spectacles, old suitcases piled upon each other...together with the corpses they told a story that did not need any words.

The policemen returned to the courtyard and conferred with the fire captain. A word or two of what they were saying drifted on the air...a murmur went round the crowd that here was a house



A body being removed from No. 21 rue Lesueur, formerly home to the very wealthy. This image barely hints at the horrors that were committed inside

of horror, and soon the numbers in the road outside the courtyard had doubled and trebled in size.

Then occurred surely one of the most curious incidents that has ever happened at a major crime scene. A thin, dark man of middle-age shouldered his way through the crowd and approached the courtyard gate, now

a group of policemen in a corner of the courtyard. Because none of them took any notice of him he turned about and went into the house.

One of the policemen watching him out of the corner of his eye was intrigued. He thought about it for a minute or two, then, his curiosity getting the better

Suddenly aware that he was being watched, Dr. Petiot turned and said, "It isn't a pretty sight, is it?"

Dr. Petiot didn't give him a chance to answer or ask any questions; he brushed past the policeman and climbed the stairs. Up in the courtyard the other officers had just been informed by the constable at the gate that the owner of the house had arrived.

The sergeant, just back at the crime scene from telephoning his report to headquarters, was the first to accost the stranger.

"Are you the owner of this house?" he asked.

"Yes, I am," replied Dr. Petiot.

"You will have to come down to headquarters with me for questioning."

"Don't you understand what you've discovered, sergeant?"

"I understand perfectly, sir. I repeat, you will have to come down to headquarters."

"All right, let me make it plain to you. You've discovered in my house an execution chamber of the

The sergeant gazed at the doctor in awe. He knew that if the police kept quiet about their discovery, men of the Resistance would not suffer. It would also be another nail in the coffin of the Hun...

closed and guarded.

"I'm sorry but you can't come in, sir," said the policeman. "I've got strict orders."

"I must come in. I'm Dr. Petiot, the owner of the house," the man replied. "Your sergeant phoned me to report here."

Hesitantly, the constable opened the gate. The doctor strode in and went up to

of him, followed the stranger into the house and down into the cellar.

The furnace had already been put out by the firemen, so the air was now just about breathable. The policeman saw Dr. Petiot standing in the centre of the room.

He watched as the doctor, his hands deep in his coat pockets, strolled over to one of the corpses and kicked it.

Resistance movement. The bodies in that cellar are all Germans and collaborators.

"Don't let's beat about the bush. You and I are both patriots. If you question me about this the Gestapo will come down on me and all the good work in killing these dreadful people will be undone. For heaven's sake leave it alone!"

The sergeant gazed at the doctor, first in disbelief, then in awe. He knew what they both understood – that if the police kept quiet about their discovery the Resistance personnel, who were responsible for this house of horror, would not suffer, and that would be another nail in the coffin of the Hun.

The sergeant glanced at his subordinates. His mind made up, he saluted the doctor.

"I'm sorry there's been a mistake, sir," he said. "Goodnight."

"Goodnight, sergeant." Petiot turned and walked away, disappearing into the crowd.

The policeman who had followed the stranger into the cellar rushed up to his superior. "You're letting that man go?" he asked.

"Yes, I am. He's not the

owner of the house. He was just one of the crowd – he shouldn't have been let in."

Farther down the road Dr. Marcel Petiot permitted himself a smile. It seemed to him that he had got away with mass murder.

It didn't take long for the police – or the rest of Paris for that matter – to disabuse the police sergeant of the idea that he had acted in the interest of the Resistance movement.

The press cleared the war news from its front pages to announce "Mass Murder in rue Lesueur!" and "Execution Chamber Discovered!" as Commissaire Georges Massu, chief of the Brigade Criminelle, moved in to take charge of the investigation.

Massu started by visiting the death house and studied its layout. He went first to the small consulting room where Gusbinov had once sat with his suitcase, then along a passage, through several doors to a small triangular chamber with a false door masking its far wall.

The walls of this chamber had been soundproofed. There was no furniture and no exterior light, but a small

window, covered with a form of magnifying glass, was set in an inside wall of the room. This, Massu decided, must have been the execution chamber.

He went next to the cellar where the firemen had first broken in. The remains of at least 20 bodies were strewn about the room and half a human body was found smouldering inside a furnace. The other half was propped against the wall. All the other rooms in the house were unfurnished and so covered in dust as clearly not to have been used.

In the courtyard was a deep

"And his wife, your sister-in-law?" he was asked by a detective.

"Haven't seen her either for just as long," replied Maurice. "They never come here."

But when his house was searched it was evident that someone had stayed there the previous night, and Maurice Petiot was arrested for making a false statement.

The police still thought Dr. Petiot might be in Auxerre, and they combed the town with no success. There and in Paris they arrested four unconnected men who, it seemed, had been on the lookout for unfortunates



Petiot's activities caused a sensation. Here a large crowd mill about outside his home at 66 rue Caumartin. Left, officials gather around the spot in the courtyard where the police found a block and tackle set over a pit filled with quicklime

pit with a block and tackle set over it. There were traces of quicklime at the bottom of the pit and indications that the murderer lowered the bodies into the quicklime before burning them in the furnace.

The constitution of the French Republic forbade entry into a private house during the night, so it was not until 6 a.m. on Sunday, March 12th, that the police broke into Petiot's home at 66 rue Caumartin.

Not surprisingly, no one was at home. There was, however, evidence that the occupants had departed in a hurry.

The investigation moved to Auxerre, where it was known that Petiot had spent his youth. There the police discovered his brother Maurice, who had a radio repair shop in the town.

"I've no idea where Marcel is," Maurice protested. "I haven't seen him for several years."

wanting to leave France. They had escorted these hopefuls to 21 rue Lesueur. For this they received a small reward per victim delivered. They had, however, been completely ignorant of the ultimate fate of the people they took to Dr. Petiot.

As a result of intensive questioning of Maurice Petiot a huge pile of suitcases, which had belonged to Dr. Petiot's victims, were traced to their hiding-place, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Neuhausen in Auxerre. They were also arrested.

So too was anyone else who had known Dr. Petiot, or who had had even the remotest connection with him. Each one was asked to write a statement, and there were hundreds of them. One struck a chill of horror through the investigators.

His name was Rene Nezonnet, and he had been a friend of Marcel and Maurice Petiot for years. One night, he said, Maurice had confided in



him, "My brother Marcel has killed at least sixty people."

Nezondet's statement drove the Paris Police into a frenzy of activity. They pored over hundreds of statements and pulled in people for questioning even if they'd only heard of the Petiot family. But Dr. Petiot was nowhere to be seen.

Spring gave way to summer and on June 6th the D-Day invasion of Europe drove the Dr. Petiot story out of the newspapers.

Eleven weeks later, on August 24th, the rattle of machine-gun fire was heard in the streets of Paris as forward elements of General Leclerc's French armoured division smashed through enemy lines to the cheers of Parisians. The city, at last, was free.

Now it was time for revenge.

Collaborators were rooted out of their hiding-places and shot or bludgeoned to death by the mob. Women

Dr. Petiot was their next-door neighbour.

Then one October morning in 1944 a letter arrived at the offices of the newspaper *Resistance*. And it purported to come from Dr. Marcel Petiot.

It was nonsense, the letter said, to suggest, as was being suggested in some quarters, that Dr. Marcel Petiot was a Nazi hireling. For throughout the war he had been an active member of the underground movement.

Indeed, he was even now a member of the FFI, the Resistance army rooting out traitors in liberated France and operating behind enemy lines in those parts of France still occupied by the Germans. (The European war was to continue until May the following year).

The editors of *Resistance* reckoned the letter was almost certainly either from Petiot or from a close friend of his – and it was also a monumental blunder. For it claimed that he was likely to

bearded "Valery" jogged up a flight of steps from the underground station of Saint-Mande-Tournelle on the outskirts of Paris and strode along the pavement.

He heard someone call his name and saw two men advancing towards him. He paused, glanced over his

"executioner" of 63 people was lengthy, so the court decided to concern itself only with the 27 bodies discovered in the cellar of 21 rue Lesueur.

The prosecutor, M. Pierre Duval, sought to prove that some, if not all, of the 27 people were neither Germans

Victory celebrations raged on for two weeks. Somewhere in Paris at that time, jostling with the crowds, was Dr. Marcel Petiot, murderer of at least 60 people

who had "fraternised" with German soldiers were dragged screaming, naked and shaven-headed, through the streets.

Resistance fighters, their ranks unaccountably swollen, drank to Resistance fighters who had neither resisted nor fought. Paris was mad with courage and lusting for vengeance.

The celebrations raged on for at least two weeks. Somewhere in Paris at that time, jostling with the crowds, was Dr. Marcel Petiot, murderer of at least 60 people. He moved unseen, unrecognised, rejoicing with the crowds, calculating.

As the celebrations began to subside, people slowly went back to ordinary things. It was then that they began to ask, "Where is Dr. Marcel Petiot?" The newspapers took up the cry and soon all France was speculating about the killer in its midst. Reports of sightings came flooding in and hundreds of letters were written to newspapers from people declaring that

be found in the ranks of the FFI.

So, they wondered, why was it written at all? Probably not out of outraged patriotism but because Petiot wanted to appear capable of outraged patriotism.

He wanted to be seen as an exterminator of Nazis.

The editors of *Resistance* made full use of the letter, then passed it over to the police, who passed it on to Colonel Roll, chief of the FFI in Paris.

The colonel was asked to compare it with samples of the handwriting of all the officers under his command. That was a considerable task, so it wasn't until two weeks later that intelligence officers were able positively to identify the author of the letter as a Captain Henri Valery.

This officer, stationed at Reuilly, had served the FFI with distinction for exactly six weeks.

The police swiftly moved in. On the morning of October 31st, 1944, the dark,



shoulder and saw three more men coming up from behind. He looked round, searching for a quick escape route, but men were now advancing on him from all sides. Their leader grabbed him by the wrist and said, "Dr. Marcel Petiot, you are under arrest for murder."

The war in Europe had been over for nine months when, on March 18th, 1946, Dr. Marcel Petiot stepped into the Assizes Court of the Seine to face trial. He was dressed in a pin-stripe suit, bow tie and sandals.

The case for the prosecution of the confessed

nor traitors, and that Petiot murdered them for personal gain.

M. Duval demonstrated that Petiot acquired the house in rue Lesueur for the express purpose of murder. The foreman of a building firm gave evidence that he had supervised a number of alterations, including the construction of the windowless, soundproof chamber.

These alterations were completed in September 1941, and Petiot's known victims began to disappear early in 1942.

The vast amount of luggage found in Auxerre

proved to be a principal source of information about the identity of the victims. The luggage was brought into court and stacked behind the prosecutor's box for the duration of the trial.

The first victim, it was thought, was the Pole Joachim Gusbinov. He

personal effects discovered in the house of death were his steel-rimmed glasses.

Another of the early victims was a Jewish colleague of Petiot's, Dr. Paul Braunberger. The Knellers, an entire family, had followed Dr. Braunberger into the soundproof chamber.

disquieting."

Prosecutor Duval told the court that Petiot's campaign of death went on throughout 1942 and until May 1943. It was halted by an extraordinary hiccup in the doctor's bizarre career.

It seemed that while the French Police were blissfully

December 1943.

In court Prosecutor Duval made much of the fact that Petiot was eventually released by the Gestapo.

"The Gestapo interrogators must have become convinced that the doctor was entirely innocent of any form of underground activity," Duval claimed.

"The fact that they released him suggests that they had learned the truth of his activities and had given him a free hand to continue his good work.

"The truth is that he was released by the Gestapo to continue his cold-blooded murders of patriotic Frenchmen, persecuted Jews, foreigners, men, women and children to the total of sixty-three souls."

In his own defence, Petiot continued to claim that he had been an active member of the underground forces during the war and that he killed only Nazis and French traitors.

The point was hammered home by his defence counsel, Maitre Rene Floriot, who put into the minds of the jury the appalling possibility that in condemning Petiot they might be sending to the guillotine a heroic Resistance fighter and true patriot.

"He is one of those gallant Frenchmen from whom all humanity was wrung by the war," declared Maitre Floriot. "One of those who joined the underground forces in a flush of youthful patriotism."

Throughout all this, Petiot's face resembled a white, pinched mask. No expression or show of feeling ever betrayed him.

But the pose couldn't be maintained. The doctor began to lose his composure when the court president, Judge Leser, cross-examined him.

Petiot told the judge that he was unable to name any of his Nazi victims, but the fact that they were Nazis was enough to ensure their death at his hands.

"From which units did these Nazis come?" the judge asked.

"I can't remember exactly," Petiot confessed.

"Did you actually help any patriots escape from France?"

"Yes, I did. That is true."

"Who were they?" the judge asked. "Why did they not come forward? Surely



Left, a bewildered-looking Dr. Petiot in court. The photo is one of the more poignant images from the case as it shows him against a backdrop of his victims' piled-up suitcases. Above, Joachim Gusbinov, one of those many victims



Maitre Rene Floriot with Mme. Petiot. He tried to portray his client as a hero rather than a villain

had sold his fur business, withdrawn two million francs from his bank and vanished without trace in January 1942.

Among Gusbinov's

Witnesses and friends of the victims filed in and out of the witness-box. One told how he nearly became a Petiot victim when, in his anxiety to escape from France, he visited the doctor and sounded him out on the idea.

Petiot received him in his consulting room and agreed that he could

smuggle him out of the country for a price. The witness did not return for a second interview because he found the doctor "a little

unaware of what the doctor was doing, the Gestapo had a shrewd idea of his activities.

Suspecting him of helping his countrymen escape from France and needing proof, they sent one of their agents, a French Jew who had been blackmailed into the service of the Gestapo, to Dr. Petiot, with instructions to sound him out on the possibilities of an escape from the country.

When the agent failed to report back, the Gestapo immediately assumed that he had taken advantage of the doctor's offer and made good his escape. They never imagined that any harm could have befallen him.

Petiot, of course, had no idea he was murdering a Gestapo agent, but he was soon to find out. The Gestapo arrived at his door, arrested him and charged him with helping saboteurs escape from France.

The doctor was held prisoner, and presumably interrogated, for eight months. He was released, apparently unscathed, in

they would want to save you?"

In the witness-box Petiot began to shrink visibly. He twisted his head to one side while he thought of an answer to one question, and constantly smoothed back his unruly hair. Then he started to lose his self-control.

"Yes, it's true! I killed them!" he shouted. "But I killed them to help the Resistance movement. You must acquit me of those killings, and when I have been acquitted, I'll give you the names of other victims for whose deaths you will acquit me too!"

The judge went on remorselessly. Who were his Resistance comrades? Where were the men who had fought by his side? Why did they not come forward?

"No, no! I refuse to give you names! I won't betray the men for whom I fought!"

Suddenly, it seemed, everyone in that packed court sensed that Marcel Petiot was a doomed man.

For all that, the trial dragged on for 13 days. Witnesses were released and then recalled, and the entire court went off to visit the house at 21 rue Lesueur.

In the evening of April 4th, 1946, the jury of seven members and three judges retired to consider their verdict. They were back at midnight after two and a half hours' deliberation.

Such was the excitement in court now, with reporters, officials and spectators milling about in the room, that the verdict became known before it reached the ears of the prisoner.

Judge Leser could not see Petiot, let alone make himself heard, as he found the doctor guilty of 24 of the 27 murders and sentenced him to death. Bewildered, Petiot turned about in the confusion and pleaded with someone to tell him what was happening.

When an official told him he was going to die, he tore himself free from his guards and shouted at the judge, "I must be avenged, I must be avenged!"

Remarkably, Dr. Marcel Petiot was still asleep when, on May 26th, 1946, the execution party came for him in the death cell. After his legs were manacled he asked for time to write some brief letters – to his wife, his



Petiot smiled as his shirt was cut from his shoulders and winced as his neck was trimmed and shaved of hair. He fingered his bare, smooth neck regretfully...

son and his brother Maurice. When he had finished he announced, "Now, gentlemen, I am entirely at your disposal."

A warder offered him a cigarette and a glass of cognac. Petiot accepted the cigarette but waved aside the drink. Then he watched the assistant executioner with the interest that an amateur usually displays when he watches a professional.

He smiled as his shirt was cut from his shoulders and winced as his neck was trimmed and shaved. He fingered his bare, smooth neck regretfully.

The prison governor thrust a form in front of Petiot. His signature was required to transfer himself

from the hands of the governor into those of the executioner. The prisoner took the governor's pen and signed with a flourish.

A warder then took Petiot's arm. He stiffened for a moment then shuffled out of his cell. As he formed up in the corridor beside the priest, he glanced back at the cell and behind at the headsman. The warder then prodded him forward.

The progress of the procession down the corridor was slow. It halted at a corner in the corridor where an altar had been set up. Petiot refused to take Mass, despite the pleas of the priest. He refused to kneel before anyone, but at length he agreed to say a



Left, the guillotine that was used to execute Marcel Petiot (above) stands upon blood-drenched cobbles in the courtyard of Sante Prison after his execution

prayer "to please my wife."

Then he turned to the priest and inquired, "Is it now. Is it here?" The priest didn't reply.

The assistant executioner strapped Petiot's arms to his sides and a warder threw open a door at the side of the corridor. The guillotine stood there before them in a courtyard open to the sky.

Petiot had little time to savour his terror. He was marched down steps and into the courtyard. He threw back his head and gazed at the sky as they carried him the last few steps and placed him in a kneeling position on a wheeled platform at the foot of the guillotine.

The governor leaned over him.

"Marcel Petiot, you are about to die. Will you now confess to your terrible crimes?" he asked.

Petiot did not answer. The headsman placed his hands on Petiot's shoulder while his assistant pushed the wheeled platform before the guillotine. The headsman then took the prisoner's head by the hair and thrust it in the aperture beneath the knife. Then he clamped down and fastened the wooden stock to hold it in place.

Dr. Marcel Petiot may have heard the sharp command. He may have heard the swishing noise as 80 pounds of steel descended upon his neck. But he could have heard no more.

Mary Kane nuzzled up to her new beau. "I'm a widow," she cooed, simpering like a teenager. "My husband was a soldier but he's been posted as missing for three years somewhere in the Middle East. I've given up all hope of seeing him again."

James Adams, an engineer at the huge Parkhead Forge in the east end of Glasgow, met Mary, 29, two months before the war ended, and, with so many husbands dead, maimed and missing in the four-year conflict, Mary had perhaps made a natural assumption about her marital status.

Or perhaps not. For Mary made up stories about herself as she went along. She lived in a fantasy world of half-truths and outright lies, and nothing she said could ever really be believed.

"You know," she used to tell friends and neighbours, "men have been taking advantage of me ever since I was a young girl. They've used me only for their own sexual satisfaction. They've always led me astray."

None of this was true. In fact, her real name was Mrs. Mary Boyle, she was the mother of five children, and her husband, John Boyle, far from being missing for three years, was alive and well.

James Adams, however, took her at her word. He was 31, and separated from his wife. He was thinking of finding another, and Mary Kane seemed to fit his purpose. He hadn't gone to war because he was in a reserved occupation, making guns for arming merchant ships. When the armistice came he and Mary ensconced themselves in an apartment at Bridgeton, Glasgow, for all the world as if they had been married for years.

The end of the First World War brought peace, but not prosperity, to Britain. No more guns were needed at Adams' workplace, and when his future was placed in more jeopardy by a General Strike in Glasgow he was laid off work.

As he miserably dragged his feet to the dole queue every morning, he was assailed

No reprieve for Glasgow killer meant...

ARMISTICE ANNIVERSARY EXECUTION



James Adams in the dock. "She'll lead you into a lot of trouble," his mother warned him about Mary Boyle

by his mother. "I wish you'd get rid of that woman you're living with," she railed at him. "I can't stand her. She's a storyteller, and she lives in a dream world. She'll lead you into a lot of trouble. Why don't you come back home and live with me?"

Adams didn't need this. He needed a job and some money. Unable to pay his wife's separation money, he was hauled before the magistrates. They had little sympathy for him. They'd heard enough hard luck stories by the end of the war to last a lifetime. For non-payment of maintenance arrears, they sent him to prison for a few weeks.

More disaster waited as he was released. Mary Kane, or Doyle as she clearly was, fell ill with consumption and was hospitalised. Consumption,

or tuberculosis, was a regular killer in the early 20th century, and with the Spanish flu, another deadly scourge, raging across Europe at that time, James Adams and many like him must have wondered whether life was truly worth living.

The one bright spot in his world was that Mary Doyle, his "wife," wrote to him from her hospital bed every day. And every day he went to visit her. There was no doubting it: this was true love.

By spring of 1919 Mary was deemed cured, and sent home. On Friday, August 1st, she woke up a worried woman. This was to be moving day – she and Adams had taken a lease on another flat – but some distressing news had arrived.

John Doyle, her soldier husband, was coming home,

James Adams was callously abandoned by his married lover when her soldier husband reappeared.

That wasn't justification for killing her – but was it insensitive to execute him on the day that meant peace to the world?

alive and well, from the Middle East.

Somehow she had to waylay him before he discovered she was living with James Adams. But how? She tried asking her sisters to do her dirty work for her, but they didn't want to know.

"You got yourself into this mess, carrying on with a married man," they scoffed. "Now get yourself out of it!"

Mary next tried the War Pensions Committee. They were more helpful. They arranged a meeting for the afternoon of August 1st, which of course was moving day. Now, as the time for the meeting grew nearer, she was getting terrified.

That morning she had told James Adams half the story. That was generally as far as Mary went – the other half was always a pack of lies.



James Adams' job as a gun fitter for merchant ships (above) had kept him from going to war

"It seems my husband is alive and back in the UK," she said, feigning indifference. "I've no interest in him, of course, but the Pensions Committee want me to meet him to arrange custody for our eldest child. It's all about clearing up the financial situation, really."

James nodded. He was quite happy to take custody of Mary's eldest child, a boy, if necessary.

"But we're supposed to be moving home today," he said. "Won't it be a bit awkward?"

"It'll be all right," Mary assured him. "You look after the moving. The pensions meeting is at 2.30, so I'll be home at four o'clock and we'll have a nice cup of tea."

By the time four o'clock came round Adams didn't need a cup of tea – he'd already sunk a good few pints of beer. When the couple's few possessions were in place in their new rented flat there was still no sign of Mary. Adams sat down and waited, and by five o'clock he was getting agitated.

What had happened to Mary?

One place she might be, he reckoned, was her sister's place in Cameron Street in the Maryhill area. His hunch proved correct – when he arrived at the Cameron Street apartment there was Mary, deep in conversation with her sister, Grace Scott. She looked up as Adams entered.

"I've got some bad news for you, James," she announced. "I've decided to go back to my husband."

Adams' jaw dropped. So this was what she had been doing all afternoon! He sat

down and buried his face in his hands.

Calmly, quietly, Mary explained her change of mind. She hadn't intended to succumb to her husband's blandishments, but, well, he was persuasive, and she hadn't seen him for three years, and surely her lover must have realised that their affair wouldn't last forever...

Shaking with emotion, Adams ran into the bathroom and wiped scalding tears from his eyes. Then he remembered the razor he had in his pocket. He went back into the living-room, brandished the razor, and dramatically threatened to cut his own throat.

Grace Scott and her two children, who witnessed this theatrical scene, shrank back, alarmed at the turn events were taking, while Mary rushed forward and tried to snatch the razor from his hand. She missed, and Adams, with a deft turn, brought the blade down hard across her neck, cutting her throat with one sweep of the razor. Mary slumped to the floor, her life's blood gushing from her neck. Within seconds she was dead.

Like a man in a trance, Adams turned and walked out of the flat. For the next six hours he walked and walked across Glasgow, and far into the night. At midnight he walked into a police station and inquired loftily: "I am awaiting developments in the Cameron Street affair."

The desk sergeant eyed him sceptically. "As a matter of fact, we have been investigating an attack on a

lady in that street," he said. "Is that what you are alluding too? Are you involved?"

"I am the attacker."

"Then you will be charged with her murder."

Adams seemed surprised.

"Is she dead?" he asked.

The question seemed to imply that he had no idea what he was doing when he cut Mary's throat. That was possible, given the amount of drink he had absorbed. But for the Glasgow police desk sergeant two things were clear – Mary Boyle, or Kane, was dead, and Adams had killed her. With an air of finality he snapped handcuffs over the

I'd stopped writing letters to her – she never wrote back, anyway.

"But to tell the truth, when I met her yesterday afternoon to discuss our financial arrangements I felt sorry for her. I had a bit of a change of heart, and I could see she was thinking about it too. She told me she was willing to give it another chance, just to see how we would get on.

"My primary reason for agreeing was the kids. We've got five kids, and they're all in a council care home. It would be a happy ending if we were all reunited again. When Mary said she'd be only too

Members of the public take a final look down the trap-door at Glasgow's Duke Street Prison where James Adams was hanged shortly before the demolition of the prison in 1959



killer's wrists.

The police, who had answered Grace Scott's frantic call soon after Adams' departure, had arrived in Cameron Street to find Mary slumped against a blood-spattered kitchen wall. The murder weapon, still wet with blood, was on the kitchen table.

Apart from the killer, the man they wanted to talk to most was 32-year-old John Doyle, the soldier-husband who had been "missing" for three years.

"I knew all the things Mary was up to," he told detectives. "Frankly, I wanted nothing more to do with her.

happy to give up this bloke Adams, my mind was made up."

If John Doyle's story was true, then there was no reason why he should not have his wife back, and lots of reasons for branding Mary as an arch-two-timer, cynically manipulating the two men in her life.

Did Adams actually know that Mary would be in Cameron Street when he set out to find her that fatal afternoon? Did he have reason to suspect that she was two-timing him, and did he go there deliberately intending to kill her?

These were questions to be

answered when he appeared before the Glasgow High Court on Tuesday, October 21st, 1919, where his defence team claimed he had been provoked and inflamed by drink, and that he was suffering from diminished responsibility.

The defence of Adams was eloquent and compelling. "Adams was always very good to Mary Doyle," his lawyer said. "This was despite the fact that she was unreliable and lied and lied to him."

John Doyle, her husband, got it in the neck, however. "He fathered a child with a



black woman while he was serving in Egypt," the court was told.

"Mary Doyle told all her friends that she preferred Adams, and did not want her husband back," said the defence lawyer. "Adams believed her. He had no idea that she was simply lying. He just wanted to be with her."

Friends and neighbours had urged Mary to go back to her mum, if not her husband. But Mary, who looked much younger than her real age, stoically said she must press on with her life, and that her future was now with James Adams.

"Adams clearly had no



Above, hangman John Ellis, assisted by Robert Baxter (right), performed the execution of James Adams



intention of killing the victim," the defence lawyer claimed. "This is evidenced from his comments at the police station. There is no evidence at all that Adams went to Cameron Street intending to commit murder."

Why then was he carrying a "cut-throat" razor when he went to Mrs. Scott's? There was a simple answer to that. His landlady said that on several occasions he had asked her if she had a leather belt so that he could "strop" his razor – the customary method used to sharpen a razor in those days.

She hadn't, so he said he would take the razor to a barber's shop and have it "stropped" there. He put it in his pocket, but forgot to look for a barber's shop.

It was plausible enough explanation, but it might not have convinced all the jurors.

Most men were in the habit of "stropping" their razors three or four times a week, if not every day, so that a one-off visit to a barber's shop wouldn't do much to solve the problem of a blunt razor.

One of Mrs. Scott's children, seven-year-old Charlie, who was an eye-witness to the murder, testified that he saw Adams produce the razor "from

behind his back" as he entered the room. That would certainly suggest premeditation.

The judge, Lord Edward Salvesen, told the jury in his summing-up that Mary Doyle was murdered because

therefore to reduce the case to manslaughter – culpable homicide under Scottish law.

The jury took 13 minutes to return with a unanimous verdict of 15-0 for murder, and they made no recommendation for mercy. The judge nodded. "I entirely agree with your conclusion," he said. Then he ordered Adams to be hanged at Glasgow's Duke Street Prison on Tuesday, November 11th, 1919.

When the execution date became public knowledge there was a collective sharp intake of breath. Hanging a man on the first anniversary of the armistice? Had the judge gone mad? Didn't he realise how gratuitously offensive this would be to those who died in the war?

A petition with more than 10,000 signatures was hurriedly prepared. It was ignored. The authorities still feared the unfortunate execution date would inflame the city – after all, Glasgow's General Strike had happened less than a year ago. Ordinary folk had become mettlesome people since the war ended.

But in the end nothing happened. Hangman John Ellis, assisted by Robert Baxter, performed the execution without a hitch. The large crowd waiting outside the prison hardly stirred.

Today, the Parkland Forge where James Adams made war munitions is a retail park and leisure complex. It is a short distance from

where Duke Street Prison once stood. Demolition work began at the prison in 1958 to make way for the Ladywell housing estate, built on the site from 1961 to 1964.

The only remaining structure of the prison is part of the boundary wall. It is all that is left as a reminder of the tragic love triangle that was ended by a hangman's noose.



The front cover of The Daily Mirror for Tuesday, November 19th, 1919, published on the day of Adams' execution

she decided to return to her "marital duties," which was "a natural desire" on her part, and that was the reason why Adams decided to kill her.

There was nothing

February 18th HEAD OF KIDNAPPED MUM CHOPPED OFF

KIDNAPPERS WHO abducted a Mexican mother and cut her head off when a ransom demand wasn't paid are being hunted by police.



Brutal end:
Susana Carrera

The decapitated remains of businesswoman Susana Carrera were found in a bin bag on a street in her home city of Coatzacoalcas. A note on top of the bag blamed her husband for not paying the ransom, according to authorities.

Mrs. Carrera had been abducted a week earlier from outside a friend's home where she had gone to pick up one of her children. CCTV footage showed her captors pulling up in a car and, seconds later, bundling her inside.

The ransom demand had been for four million Mexican pesos (£161,000).

TEEN ABDUCTED, RAPED AND MURDERED ALESHA

February 22nd

A TEENAGE boy is facing a life sentence after being found guilty of the abduction, rape and murder of six-year-old Alesha MacPhail on the Isle of Bute.



Sixteen-year-old Aaron Campbell was told by Judge Lord Matthews at the High Court in Glasgow that he had committed some of the "wickedest, most evil crimes this court has ever heard."

Jurors unanimously found him guilty following a nine-day trial.

Campbell abducted Alesha from the bed she was sleeping in at her grandparents' home on July 2nd, 2018, and inflicted "catastrophic" injuries. Using a knife to silence her, he carried Alesha to the grounds of a disused hotel where he raped and smothered her. He then dumped her naked body



Above, police look for evidence after the discovery of Alesha's body. Inset above, tragic Alesha. Inset left, her killer Aaron Campbell

in woodland.

The court heard evidence that Alesha, from Airdrie, North Lanarkshire, suffered 117 injuries and died from significant pressure being applied to her face and neck.

Lord Matthews lifted a ban on reporting the name of the teenage killer, following the guilty verdict.

The jury was told of overwhelming scientific evidence linking the killer to the murder, with a match for his DNA detected on 14 different parts of Alesha's body, as well as a match for

his semen indicating that he raped the child.

Fibres believed to be from the accused's trousers were also found on Alesha's clothing.

Throughout the trial Campbell had tried to blame the murder on the girlfriend of Alesha's father. However, the jury rejected this defence which the prosecution described as "preposterous"

Lord Matthews told the killer: "I have no idea why you did this. I do know that the evidence against you was overwhelming."

February 18th POLICE REVIEW UNSOLVED A12 MURDER

THIRTY YEARS after her strangled body was discovered in a ditch in Suffolk, police are reviewing the unsolved murder of London mother Jeanette Kempton.



Strangled:
Jeanette Kempton

Mrs. Kempton, from Brixton, was last seen alive leaving a hotel in London on February 2nd, 1989. Her body was discovered 16 days later on the Earl of Stradbroke's estate off the A12 at Wangford.

A police spokesman said: "She had no connections to Norfolk and Suffolk and was deposited in a ditch totally out of context."

"There were no witnesses and no forensic clues to take you anywhere."

"But there could be someone out there who knows something and that could turn things around very quickly."

February 25th FIELD SEARCH FOR MURDERED LINDA

WILTSHIRE POLICE have been searching a field in a bid to find a link to the disappearance of murdered mother-of-four Linda Razzell.

Mrs. Razzell was 41 years old when she disappeared in 2002 after setting off for work at Swindon College from her home in Highworth.

Her body has never been found, but in 2003 her husband Glyn was jailed for life for her murder. He claimed he was innocent.

Following a tip-off, police with sniffer dogs began searching for evidence at a site near Pentylands Lane in Highworth.

Mr. Razzell failed to overturn his conviction in 2005. He claimed that DNA evidence against him – drops of blood found in the boot of a car – was unreliable.

February 28th KILLER WIFE'S CONVICTION QUASHED

A SURREY woman imprisoned for the hammer-attack killing of her husband has had her conviction for murder overturned at the Court of Appeal in London.

Sally Challen, 65, was jailed for life at Guildford Crown Court in 2011 for the 2010 murder of her car-dealer husband Richard, 61, and will now face a retrial.

A panel of three judges quashed the conviction, saying that new evidence, unavailable at the time of the trial, made it unsafe.

Lady Justice Hallett, sitting with Mr. Justice Sweeney and Mrs. Justice Cheema-Grubb, said: "The court of appeal heard that, in the opinion of a consultant forensic psychiatrist, the appellant was suffering from two



Sally Challen with her husband and victim Richard

mental disorders at the time of the killing.

"This evidence was not available at the time of the trial and the court quashed the conviction and ordered a retrial."

Mrs. Challen, of Claygate, was separated from her husband when she killed him with 20 hammer blows to the head. She claims she suffered 40 years of being controlled and humiliated by him.

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Nottingham's Classic Case Of **ARSENIC AND OLD JUSTICE**

THE HANGMEN OF Old England were often looked upon as demi-heroes, much in the same way as the marshals of such frontier towns as Dodge City, Wichita and Abilene were lionised by the Americans.

They were, after all, the last guardians of civilisation, the ultimate bastion against the ungodly; stern men

Case report by Edward T. Hart

who considered it their duty to hang murderers, to say nothing of the odd sheep-stealer and picker of pockets.

But few looked upon James Japhcote as a hero, although he too was a hangman. He had arrived in Nottingham on August 5th, 1851, with the intention of hanging a 22-year-old dressmaker named Sarah Barber the following day.

However, the people of Nottingham didn't particularly wish to have Sarah hanged, and certainly not by Japhcote. More than 11,000 of them had signed a petition appealing for mercy and sent it to the Home Office.

Despite his unpopularity, or maybe because of it, Japhcote had become something of a legend, travelling the country with a carpet bag filled with the grim tools of his trade.

Upon his arrival at Nottingham Jail he arranged the contents of this bag upon a table with systematic care. There was the screw staple for passing through a beam, the awful-looking cap, a rope with a running noose at one end and a spring hook at the other (for fastening to the staple in the beam), and thinner ropes for pinioning.



Above, a noose seen today at the old Nottingham Jail. Thousands of Nottingham folk were opposed to the hanging of Sarah Barber. Background, rural Eastwood

Someone remarked that the thicker rope had been used.

"Yes," replied Japhcote, "but only once."

"When was that?" he was asked.

"Two years ago."

"Where at?"

"Warwick."

"Who was the party executed?"

"Mary Ball."

"For what offence was she hanged?"

"Poisoning her husband."

He could scarcely have been described as gabby. Officials in the prison were outraged. They felt that if Sarah Barber was destined to meet her Maker on the morrow she at least had the right to arrive with a new rope around her neck, a detail that presumably wouldn't have concerned her one way or the other.

A few hours later, however, the point became irrelevant. The Home Office had granted a two-week respite so that new evidence could be considered.

Japhcote set off for his home at Attlebury, near Nuneaton, promising to return in a fortnight; and the citizens watched him go, hoping that they had seen the last of him. There was too much ill feeling against

Japhcote for him ever to be a hero.

No one could recall seeing Japhcote show even a flicker of emotion. Nor could anyone remember him stringing more than four words together in any given sentence.

Nor was there anything remotely noble in his choice of profession. He wasn't a hangman because he deplored sin or because he wished the good people of England to sleep sound in their beds. He was an executioner because he wanted the money, which in those days ranged from £2 to £5 for a hanging, according to the distance travelled and problems encountered.

He was as eager for hangings as a jockey is for horses to ride. He would scour the newspapers daily, seeking reports of capital crimes. And as soon as he

***Japhcote wasn't
a hangman
because he
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money***

found one, he would write immediately to the governor of the local jail, saying, "I can give you the highest testimonials, both as to character and to ability."

No one was too sure about that claim on either count. It was true that he had assisted the celebrated William Calcraft, but apparently only once. Calcraft tended to be choosy.

Japhcote had written to Nottingham Jail's governor before the trial of Sarah Barber and her 19-year-old companion, Robert Ingram, had even begun. He prided himself upon being ahead of the game.

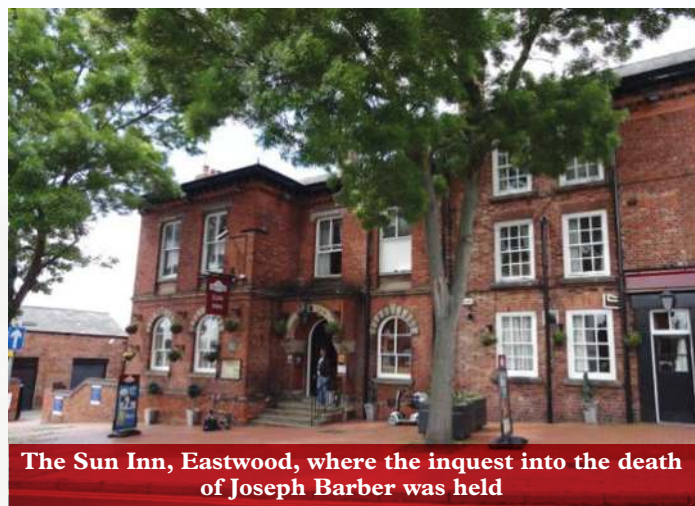
But if Japhcote was a strange sight to behold, so too was Sarah, who stood six feet two inches in her stockinged feet. At that time this made her a very tall woman indeed. Yet there was nothing ungainly about her. As a teenager she had excelled at all sports, and she had a good figure. She was described as being fair-haired and quite attractive. Certainly she seems to have had a full share of admirers.

She was always conscious, however, of the fact that she towered over just about everyone in Eastwood, near Nottingham (later the birthplace of author D. H. Lawrence). This, coupled with her otherwise slender build, made her feel freakish, so she wore at least 12 petticoats in a bid to balance things out a little. As a result, she looked positively Amazonian.

From the very beginning, she had been unlucky. Her father had died before she was born and her mother followed him two years later. Her grandmother looked after her for a while, and then she too died. So Sarah never really had a settled home.

Then at 15 she had the misfortune to meet Joseph Barber, a horse dealer and rascal. He was 28 at the time, and it was said that there wasn't a good-looking woman in Eastwood whom he hadn't already bedded... plus a few ugly ones on dark nights or when he was full of ale.

As soon as he discovered that Sarah had been left £1,000 by her grandparents he bedded



The Sun Inn, Eastwood, where the inquest into the death of Joseph Barber was held

her too. And two years later, when she was just 17, they were married.

It was a most unhappy union. He would be violent when drunk, which was often, and once chased her down the street, beating her with a stick. He spent most of her inheritance on wild living, and continued to pursue just about every woman in sight.

By the time she was 20, she'd had enough. She went to France with a lover of her own, a man called Gillott, and settled in Paris. But Gillott wasn't much of an improvement on Barber. Once the "honeymoon" period was over his main interest in life appeared to be that of securing her purse – something she had no intention of giving up. As soon as he realised this, he returned to England.

Sarah remained in Paris for a few months, living a somewhat solitary life until the day Joe Barber visited her, proverbial cap in hand. If she would come back and

live with him in Eastwood, he vowed on bended knee, he would give up the drink and the wild women. He would settle down and become a respectable married man.

It was like expecting a leopard to shed its spots, but she did return and for at least a week Barber kept his promise. Then came the drink and the violence as before. Only by now things had changed. Sarah was no longer afraid. Barber might scare the men of Eastwood with his all-too-ready fists, but he could no longer frighten his wife. She would meet him head-on and give as good as she got.

In fact, as time went by, Joe Barber came to fear her outbursts of temper. On one such occasion the local police constable, John Shaw, had gone to their house to search for a gun which Joe had allegedly stolen.

Sarah turned to her husband and said, "You see what a scrape you've got yourself into by keeping such bad company – but blast you, I'll put a stop to it and poison you, if it be longer first."

By "longer first" she meant "if it continues." And she used that expression on at least two other occasions in front of witnesses...once when Joe had returned home after spending the night with another woman. For Sarah, it was to prove an unfortunate choice of words.

By 1851, Barber's lifestyle had taken its toll. He was suffering from rheumatic fever and also from the venereal disease gonorrhoea.

This coincided with the most peaceful period the couple had enjoyed. She became a caring and

sympathetic wife; he an extremely grateful husband. But his condition continued to deteriorate, and to assist Sarah with her nursing duties, they called upon the help of a young shoemaker, Robert Ingram, who came to live in the house.

Dr. Scott Smith and his assistant Thomas Mather made regular visits; but fearing death, Barber made a will in which he left the house and his three acres of land to Sarah. The land was too heavily mortgaged to be sellable, but it would nevertheless provide her with a steady income of 12 shillings a week, no mean sum in those days.

The will was executed on March 11th, just nine days before Barber died, and during that time his condition fluctuated strangely. On the following Sunday he visited Leavers public house in Bulwell, having driven there in a coach with Robert Ingram. On the Tuesday he went for a walk in the rain. And then on the Wednesday he became so ill that Sarah summoned his mother, who stayed the night.

When the morning came Barber appeared to be so much improved that his mother went home. But during the afternoon he suffered a relapse and by the evening a handful of friends had come to sit around what they now regarded as his death bed.

Barber asked one of them, Thomas Kelk, to pray for him. Kelk did so, and Barber also prayed, saying, "I have been a swearing man, and a drinking man, and I hope the Lord will forgive me and have mercy upon me. If I should get better, I will be a different man and go to chapel and try to do all the good I can."

He added, "I want you all to know that Sarah has been a wonderful wife to me during my illness; and that Squire Walker couldn't have been better attended to than I." This was a reference to the fact that the local squire had a small army of servants to see to his every need.

He then called out, "Bob!" He wanted Robert Ingram to come upstairs. Ingram came and Barber asked his help to get out of bed. He collapsed into Ingram's arms and died some five minutes later.

THE POISONING AT EASTWOOD. CROWN COURT, THURSDAY, JULY 24. (Before Mr. Baron Parko.)

The Court was excessively crowded, and the greatest possible interest was displayed at the commencement of the proceedings in this remarkable trial.

SARAH BARBER, described in the calendar as aged 22 and a dressmaker, and ROBERT INGRAM, aged 19, butcher, were indicted, upon the coroner's warrant, for the wilful murder of Joseph Barber, on the 24th of March, 1851, at Eastwood.

Mr. Macculay, Q.C., and Mr. Denison were counsel for the Crown, and Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Cockle were retained on behalf of the prisoners.

The conduct of the female prisoner in jail, as we have before stated, has been extremely objectionable, and she has been several times put on prison punishment for using abusive language to her fellow-prisoners. Both she and the male prisoner have manifested a sad indifference to the awful position in which they are placed.

The learned Judge took his seat upon the bench at a few minutes after nine o'clock. The prisoners were placed at the dock as soon as the court was opened. Mrs. Barber was dressed in deep mourning, and appeared very sad and considerably overcome; and the male prisoner was also neatly dressed in a suit of black, and seemed conscious of his position, though he tried to conceal his anxiety. The indictment was a very long document, and occupied a considerable time in reading. Both the prisoners pleaded "Not guilty," in a low but firm voice. The following were then empannelled as a

The story might well have ended there if Sarah's former lover, Gillott, hadn't spread the rumour that Joseph Barber had been poisoned by his wife. Gillott reminded all who would listen that Sarah had frequently threatened to do this if Barber failed to mend his ways.

At the inquest held at the Sun Inn in Eastwood the coroner ordered a post-mortem, which took the best part of 10 days to complete. At first, the surgeons were unable to find any poison in the body; but eventually they discovered traces of arsenic, more than enough to have killed a man.

So the demise of Joseph Barber was officially labelled "death by poisoning." And Sarah and Robert Ingram were arrested and charged with his murder.

To the prosecution, this must have seemed a clear-cut case. Joseph had died of arsenic. Only two people, Sarah and Robert Ingram, had had the opportunity to administer the poison. And it was known that they'd been buying liberal quantities of arsenic in the weeks preceding Barber's death. They also had a motive: Sarah was clearly in a hurry to inherit her 12 shillings a week!

But it wasn't really that simple. Sarah and Ingram had for instance been buying the arsenic quite openly in the local shops, supposedly to kill the mice which were overrunning the house and were becoming a serious problem, largely because the dwelling adjoined a stable. Furthermore – according to witnesses – it was Joseph himself who had first suggested arsenic.

Now his death raised several questions. Would a woman who had threatened to poison her husband be foolish enough to carry this out in such a close-knit community as Eastwood? And if so, wouldn't she at least have made some attempt to obtain the arsenic more secretly?

As for the motive, Thomas Hazledine had been summoned to prepare the will, and he was adamant that it had been Joseph who wanted this done, not Sarah. And although the will could have given Sarah a reason

for murder, it gave Ingram no motive at all.

Here was a young man who had led a perfectly blameless life and was well known for his kindnesses. No one, not even Joseph's mother – who had no love for Sarah – had ever suggested that there was an improper relationship between Sarah and young Robert.

The post-mortem procedure would have horrified a modern pathologist. One of the surgeons, for instance, walked home with Joseph's liver in his pocket. But it seems reasonable to assume that arsenic was found, and that this was not – as the

was as baffled by this as everyone else. And then weeks later it was discovered that Mather had fled to New York, where he remained.

If Mather had removed the intestines from the coach-house – as was suspected – there seemed to be only two logical explanations. He was trying to protect himself, or Sarah.

He had been largely responsible for preparing the medicines which Joseph had taken during the final weeks of his life; and being inexperienced, he might have feared that he'd made some fatal mistake.

Alternatively, Mather might well have found Sarah an attractive and intriguing

the jury's common sense by asking whether anyone contemplating murder would have acted so openly.

The trial ended on the second day and the jury, after deliberating for two and a quarter hours, found Sarah Barber guilty of wilful murder. Robert Ingram was acquitted, and falling on his knees he remained in that position while the judge, donning the black cap, passed the sentence of death upon Sarah.

She accepted this with remarkable composure. Turning towards the jury, she said firmly, "Gentlemen of the jury, if you have found me guilty in this world, you cannot prove me guilty in the next. Gentlemen, I am not guilty. I am as innocent as a child just born."

The judge observed, "No-one who has heard the trial can for a moment doubt the justice of the verdict."

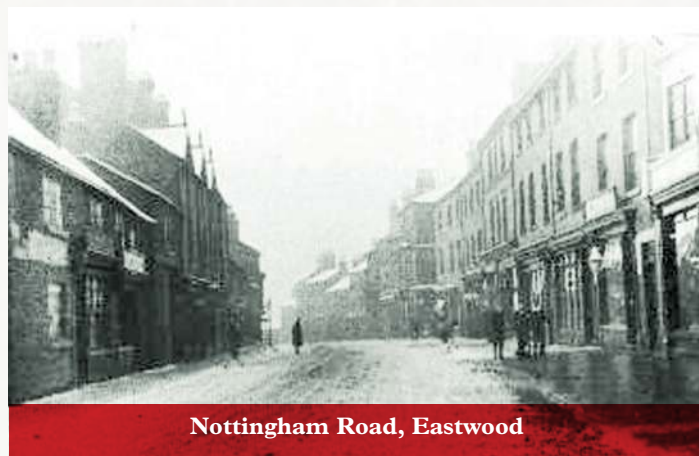
He then signalled gently to Sarah that she must leave the dock. Instead, she turned and seizing Ingram lifted him bodily from his knees, and kissed him passionately. The jailer, sensing that this could be the last embrace the two would ever share, waited a long moment before separating them.

But the story of Sarah Barber was far from over. She asked to see Mr. Hillyard, Nottingham's prison governor, and in his presence and that of a magistrate made the following statement:

"On the Sunday prior to my husband's death, Ingram bought some poison and mixed this with the medicine. I then administered this medicine unaware that it contained poison, and thus inadvertently killed my husband. Ingram didn't tell me that he'd done this, until after my husband's death."

Neither the governor nor the magistrate were over-impressed. The condemned understandably become inventive.

Nevertheless, the governor was a humane man and he had no wish to see Sarah hanged. Two days later he revisited her cell and said, "Sarah Barber, have you told the whole truth; is there anything else you can say? Your statement is not believed. Is there any way you can prove it?"



Nottingham Road, Eastwood

defence suggested – planted by persons unknown.

However, the autopsy was followed by another mystery, never solved. Part of Joseph's intestines were placed under lock and key, in the coach-house of Dr. Scott Smith. The coach-house was

lady, and thus he could have been motivated by gallantry or desire.

Such possibilities were still being discussed when the trial of Sarah Barber and Robert Ingram opened at Nottingham's July Assizes before Mr. Baron Parke, who opened by enquiring whether the female defendant was standing on a stool. He was assured that she was simply very tall, and nodded his apologies.

The prisoners were soberly dressed; Ingram in a black suit and Sarah in her widow's weeds. Ingram looked taut and nervous, while Sarah appeared almost light-hearted at times.

The prosecution made much of the threats uttered by Sarah, the inheritance as a motive and the fact that only the two prisoners would have been in a position to have administered the poison.

The defence pointed out that the entire case was based on circumstantial evidence, and appealed to

"On the Sunday before my husband's death, Ingram bought some poison and mixed this with the medicine. I inadvertently killed my husband"

then broken into and the intestines stolen.

The mystery deepened when Thomas Mather, the doctor's assistant, disappeared. The physician

"Of course I can," she replied. "The medicine bottle which was used to poison my husband is in the outhouse; and if you talk to Robert Ingram he'll tell you the truth, because he's an honest man."

They duly found the bottle containing medicine laced with arsenic. And when they questioned Ingram, he confirmed Sarah's story word for word, thereby placing himself in a novel

situation. He had been tried for murder and found not guilty...and here he was confessing.

Meanwhile, Nottingham was still preparing for a hanging. Barriers had gone up along the High Street and stacks of timber had arrived to block up the top of Garner's Hill and Long Stairs. A troop of Hussars was to be stationed along the route to hold back the

crowds, for it was anticipated that thousands would wish to see the execution. Hangings were regarded as entertainments, and that of a woman with Sarah's Amazonian dimensions would be a star attraction.

Although most of Nottingham's citizens hoped that she would be saved at the 11th hour, if there was to be a hanging they didn't intend to miss it.

Sarah's statement,

supported by letters from the trial judge and Mr. Hillyard, had been rushed to the Home Office, but still there was no response. And down in Attlebury, James Japhcote had his carpet bag packed and was counting off the days.

On August 13th a letter from the Home Office finally arrived at Nottingham Jail. The message was brief.

"Sarah Barber," it said, "is to be respited during Her Majesty's pleasure."

Mr. Hillyard hurried to Sarah's cell with the good news, but she seemed baffled by the wording of the communication. "Does it mean," she asked, "that I'm to hang on Wednesday?"

"No," said the governor, "it means that you've been reprieved."

She still seemed too stunned to understand, and her expression hadn't changed.

"Aren't you pleased?" he asked gently.

She was silent so long that he wondered whether she would answer him. Then she

August 1, 1851.

**THE EASTWOOD MURDER.
CONVICTION OF SARAH BARBER.**
(From our Third Edition of last week.)
CROWN COURT, FRIDAY.—Before Mr. Baron Parke.

Mr. Baron Parke resumed his seat at a quarter to nine o'clock. The court soon became crowded, and the greatest excitement was manifested as the case proceeded. The father and sister of the male prisoner, Ingram, were seated under the Sheriff's gallery, near the bench. There was a large attendance of the members of the medical profession. The jury having answered to their names, the prisoners were again placed in the dock. Their appearance and demeanour were nearly the same as on the previous day. Ellen Goodwill, examined by Mr. Macanley.—I live at Eastwood, with my brother-in-law, Henry Carr, druggist and grocer. I have known the female prisoner a long time ...

said slowly, "I'm very glad, very, very glad. And thank you."

Suddenly she smiled, and for the first time the governor realised what a truly attractive woman she was.

The story had a happy ending for just about everybody. Robert Ingram was inevitably charged with felony and sentenced to jail. But because he was regarded as a confused young man, he served a mercifully short sentence, and could consider himself lucky.

Sarah Barber was transported to Australia for life. She soon obtained a "ticket-of-leave" and married again.

As for the dreaded Japhcote, he had received his £5 fee for the hanging of Sarah in advance, and no one ever asked for it back!

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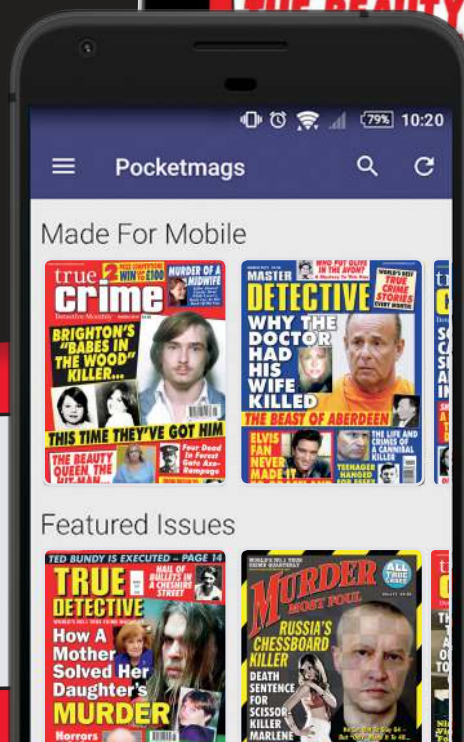
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"KILLER DAD" WRITES MESSAGES IN BLOOD

March 5th

A SUSPECTED paedophile husband, who knifed to death his son and strangled his wife before trying to kill himself, is in police custody in Moscow.

Savva Nikitin is believed to have struck in the family

flat after being confronted by his wife Maria about sexually assaulting their son Mark. The boy died having been stabbed



Savva and Maria Nikitin

62 times with a knife and screwdriver. Maria, who tried to fight her killer, was found dead nearby.

Police reportedly found the quote, "I gave you life, I will take it," written in blood on the floor of the home. The

quote comes from a novel by the famous Russian author Nikolai Gogol. Another message described Maria as "Judas."

Nikitin is believed to be the son of the Crimean author Alexander Nikitin.

MACHETE MURDERER DEAD

March 5th

A NOTORIOUS serial killer who butchered 25 farmworkers to death in California – and may have had more victims – has died in hospital while serving life for murder.

Mexican native Juan Corona, who was 85, was convicted in 1973 of the machete murders of migrant workers in Yuba City. He was working as a farm labouring contractor at the time of the murders. At his conviction



Above, Juan Corona at the time of his conviction. Below, a recent mug-shot

he was the worst serial killer in American history.

The killings were uncovered after a peach grower, who had hired Corona to supply field workers, noticed a freshly filled hole in his Sutter County orchard in May 1971. The body of labourer Kenneth Whitaker was discovered under the soil.

Six more bodies were found nearby and within days the number had grown to 25. All but one of the victims had been slashed in the head with a machete or knife. All the victims had been hired by or seen with Corona.

Following Corona's arrest, detectives found a machete, meat cleaver, axe and club among his possessions. They also found a ledger with the names of some victims.

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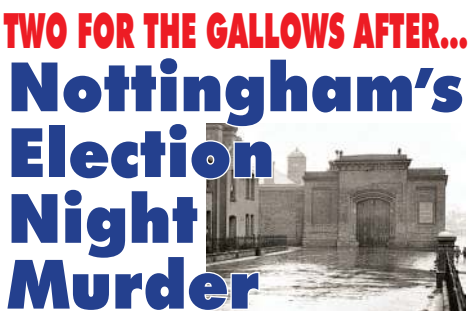
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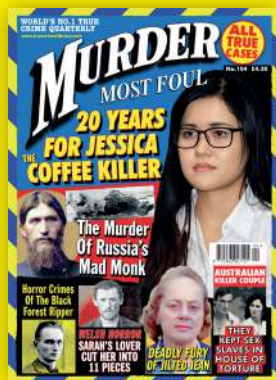
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